



SMILING BENÂRES.

CONTAINING

A SKETCH FROM THE VEDIC DAYS TO THE MODERN TIMES

WITH MANY ILLUSTRATIONS, AND A MAP OF BENARES AND ITS ENVIRONS

BY

K. S. MUTHIAH & Co.,

BENARES CITY.

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DEDICATED

WITH

KIND PERMISSION

TO

HIS HIGHNESS THE MAHARAJAH

SIR. PRABHU NARAYAN SINGH BAHADOOR, G.C.I.E.

OF

BENARES.

PREFACE.

THE cordial welcome accorded by the public to our little gem of an illustrated booklet, entitled "Smiling Benares" has encouraged us to send out this larger book at the memorable occasion of the Coronation Durbar, Delhi, though the idea of preparing it originated only so recently as September last.

No pains have been spared in the preparation of this volume, our chief object being to make it as attractive and useful as possible. A number of illustrations, from photos specially taken by ourselves, have been added in appropriate places, besides a colored plate of Their Majesties, the King-Emperor George V, and Queen-Empress Mary and half-tone portraits of Their Majesties' noble ancestors, commencing from Queen Victoria, the Idol of the Indian Nation, and those of the present Maharajah of Benares and his ancestors.

Our best thanks are due to Mr. Akshaya Kumar Mitra, Private Secretary to the late Maharajah of Benares and Mr. Sundar Narayan Arya, for the valuable assistance rendered by them in the compilation of this work.

Our thanks are also due to Mr. S. C. Chatterjee of Messrs C. Glamour & Co., Benares, for the invaluable services he has rendered us in connection with our photographic work of the various scenes that appear in this book.

We beg to announce, with the greatest pleasure, that this book has been specially designed by us, as a Loyal Souvenir to Our Most Gracious Sovereigns, being published at the time of Their Ever-Memorable and Singular Ascension to the Indian Throne at Delhi, and we earnestly hope, that it may receive due appreciation at the sympathetic hands of Our Benign Sovereigns, and their Representative Ruling Officers in the country, as well as from the Rajahs and Maharajahs and other noble sons of this ancient Aryavarta, in addition to the valuable patronage of the well-wishers of the country, in other parts of the world.

K. S. MUTHIAH & Co.,

1st December 1911. *Benares City.*

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KING-EMPEROR GEORGE V AND QUEEN EMPRESS MARY.

Tri-colour Block Printed at the Guardian Press, Madras



Her Gracious Majesty, The Late Queen Victoria.



His Majesty, The Late King Edward VII.



Her Majesty Queen-Mother Alexandra.



His Excellency, Lord Hardinge of Penshurst, P. C. G. C. B., G. M. S. I., G. M. I. E., G. C. M. G., G. C. V. O., I. S. O. The Viceroy.



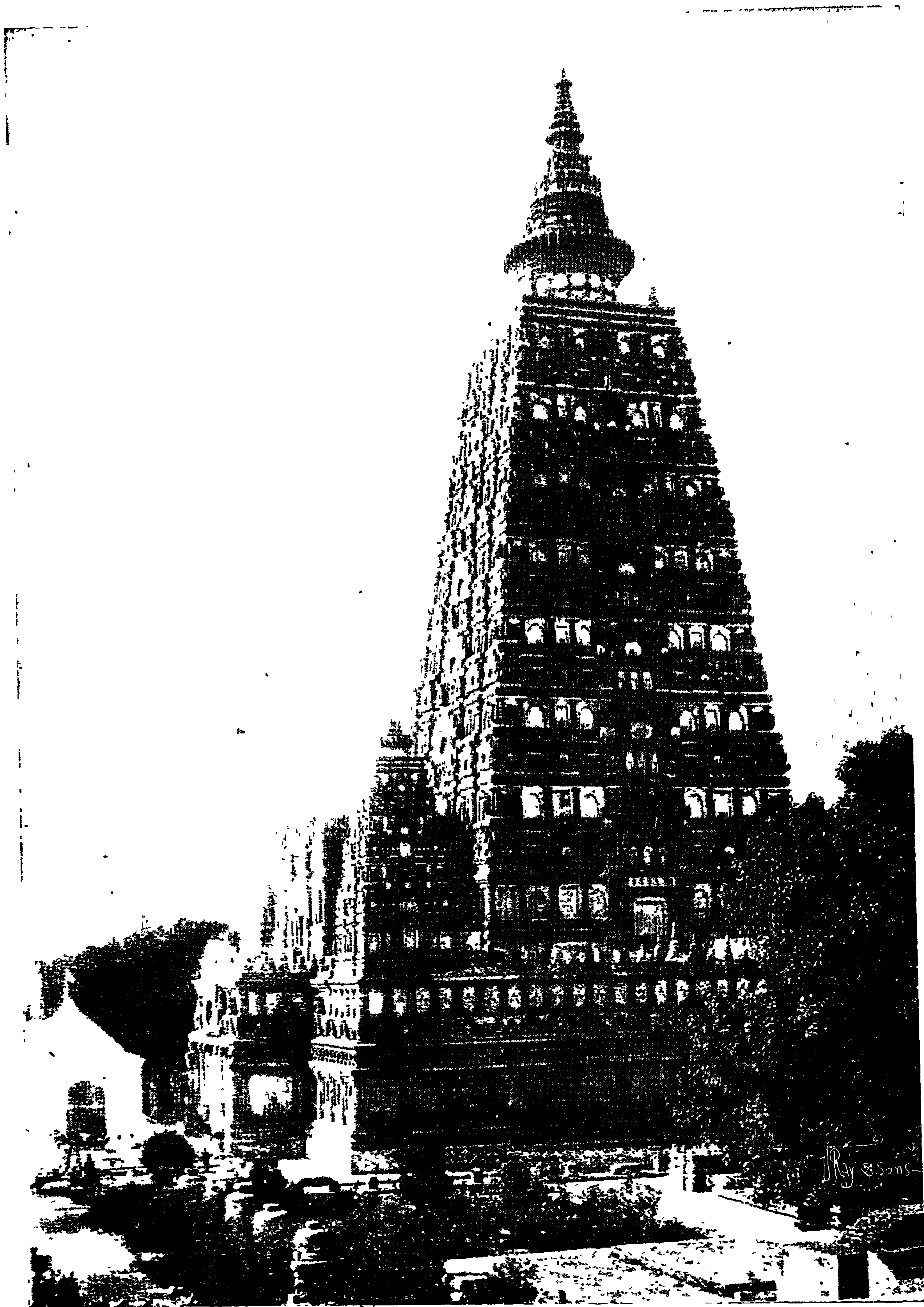
Her Excellency, Lady Hardinge.



His Higness The Maharajah Prabhu Narayana Singh Bahadoor, G. C. I. E.
of Benares.



Kumar Raj Adita Narayan Singh, of Benares.



Budh Gya.

PART I.

SRÎ KÂSÎ.



BABU DIP NARAYAN SINGH
2ND SON OF
MAHARAJAH MAHIP NARAIN SINGH.



BABU NAR NARAYAN SINGH
BROTHER OF
LATE MAHARAJAH ISHWAREE PRASAD NARAYAN SINGH
AND FATHER OF
THE PRESENT MAHARAJAH.



BABU PRASIDDHA NARAYAN SINGH
3RD SON OF
MAHARAJAH MAHIP NARAYAN SINGH
AND THE GRANDFATHER OF THE
PRESENT MAHARAJAH.

The form बनारस् (Benares, Banaras) indicating *Vârânasi*, is perhaps the work of the Mohamadan rulers. In this connexion, we must add that Aurangazeb, the most bigoted of the Moghal Rulers, attempted, in vain, to change the name of Benares into Mohammadabad, even as he tried to call Muttra by Islamabad.

रुद्रवास् (Rudravâs); this name is evidently based on the fact that it was Rudra's or Mahadev's beloved dominions over which he is said, in the *Kashi Rahasya*, to have been the sole ruler until he lost it through the strategem of Brahma, who seated his favourite *Divodâs* as supreme lord of the place "Stratagem was overcome by Stratagem" and Siva re-entered his kingdom through the cleverness of *Dhundiraj* and retained his sway over it till the advent of *Kali Yuga*, when he retired to *Kailas*, leaving अविमुक्तेश्वर (Avimuktêswar) in charge of the city.

Read *Kashi Khanda*, XXX, 3 and 4,

त्रयाणामपिलोकानाम् हितायमहते नृपः (भगीरथः) ।
समानैषीन्ततो गंगां यत्रासीन्मणिकर्णिका ॥
आनन्दकाननं शम्भोश्चक्रपुष्करणीहरेः ।
परब्रह्मैकसुक्षेत्रं लीलामोक्षसमर्पकम् ॥

The name *Ānanda Kânana* needs no further explanation than mentioning that it was also another name for this मुक्तिक्षेत्र (Mukti-Kshêtra), as verified by *Vishnu's* words to his friend *Siva*.

मुक्ताकुण्डल पातेन तवाद्रितनयाप्रिय ।
तीर्थानां परमं तीर्थं मुक्तिक्षेत्रमिहास्तुवै ॥

Kashi Khanda,—26-66.

The more popular names, yet, are *Kâshi* or *Kâsî* and *Benâres*, though the Buddhists have always distinguished the main city as Benâres and the circumjacent country as Kashi, the kingdom. As early as the fifth century A.D., *Fa Hian*, the Chinese Pilgrim, travelled up the *Heng* (Ganges) towards "the west" and reached the city of "*Pho lo nai*" (Benares) in the kingdom of "*Kia shi*". It is highly probable that, even after the Buddhistic period, the ancient city and the out-lying country were known by the two names interchangeably, thereby bequeathing to us the "*twin*" names for this holy city of the Aryas. Another convincing proof, may not be inopportune, of Dr. F. Hall, viz:—"I find that so late as the eleventh century A.D, (at a period when Kâsî was presumably, the more popular name of the city of Benâres, the circumjacent territory was known as Vârânasi.")

Knowing the various names, with their imports, by which this ancient city is known, let us trace the date of its birth, the people that first occupied it, and the probable object of the first settlers or its founder. Let us also find out its original site with its extent, and compare it with its present ones, and determine the identity which many doubt. Let us attempt to establish its great antiquity and its rare sanctity, that has so magically held millions of people under its supreme sway from time immemorial.

Taking a deep plunge, by a flight of fancy, into the misty mythic centuries before Christ, let us take a survey of the first Aryan settlement in the blessed land of "Brahmavartha," between the sacred rivers, Sarasvati and Dhrishadvati, in the North West. In this their much-beloved land, we find the pure Aryans, (whose original homes were perhaps in Central Asia or in a more westerly or northerly direction,) that professed the simple, primitive worship of the powers of Nature.

"They invoked Indra, the rain-god, as brother, friend and father, who heard their prayers; Agni, the fire-god, slayer of demons, who protected them day and night from evil; Surya 'the soul of all that moveth not or moveth'; and Savitri—the Sun and Sunshine. The early Vedic Hymns are redolent with the fragrance of a bright and genial spring-time, reflecting the joy of a simple, pastoral life in the Golden age, when the children of men played with Mother Nature in her kindest moods, and the earth and the stars sang together." *E. B. HAVELL.*

As further floods of immigrants descended from their original homes, in quick succession, it was found necessary, not only to find newer land beyond, for occupation, but also to preserve, in a systematic manner, their ancient rituals and rites, which they valued most, and did not like to be currupted by intermarriages with the Dravidians and Kolarians.

The compilation of the earlier Vêdas and the colonizing of provinces beyond their first home in the Punjab, were begun almost simultaneously or one after the other, from at least about twenty centuries before Christ, as fixed by Max Muller and other eminent persons. The *Brâhmanas* and the *Upanishads* belong to a subsequent period, say between 1300—1100 B C.. By this time and perhaps along with the compilation of the later Vêdas, the known tribal movements are believed to have been completed. At any rate, long before the eighteen days fight of the Mahâbhârata War, which has been attributed to the middle of the fifteenth century before Christ, the kingdom of the Kashi had been so well established, that the heroes of the Great Epic, honored them as their allies, allowing them to fight in their own ranks.

The *Kashis*, undoubtedly, an off-shoot of the original settlers of Brahmavartha, were perhaps among the first of those that descended from their beloved land. It is probable they went in a south-easterly direction, until the most attractive Gangetic Valley lay spread before them in all its original purity. In its primitive fertility, it is no wonder if it had afforded them ample means of sustenance for men and cattle.

This alluvial valley of one of the most prominent of Indian rivers could not only have furnished them—more a pastoral people—with all facilities, but also provided them as it still does to an extent, with a natural stronghold against the unwelcome raids and intrusions of the aboriginies of whom they were in no small dread. For, the natural amphitheatre caused by the current of this magnificent river over a high and irresistable ridge of hard kankar, towards the east of the valley, with the two sacred rivers Varuna and Assi, on the northern and southern directions respectively, only needed a small guard or wall to protect the west, the only unguarded side of this chosen land of the Aryas.

" The cool bathing in the splendid river and worship on its sunny banks would afford to the Aryan settlers refreshment for body and soul. So even in those remote times the place may have acquired a reputation as being propitious for the favoured people, and thus to them sacred soil, an oasis of spiritual life in the midst of the impious non—Aryan tribes, like Brahmavarta, their much-beloved home in the north-west ".

E. B. Havell.

May we not call this new colony of the Kashis, with its unique position and tempting advantages, favouring their spiritual life as well, a second Brahmavartha? It is even probable that their spiritual leaders, who started the compilation of the Vêdic Hymns simultaneously, might have also come down to this secluded land and in course of time "established its reputation as a great seat of Aryan Philosophy and Religion."

The story of Harischandra's sojourn to Kashi, accompanied by his wife and son, and his selling his royal personage with that of his dear Thara and Lohidas, to relieve himself of a moral debt to the shrewd warrior-chief and sage, Visvamitra, (the great rival of Vashista of the then orthodox school,) takes us to a far anterior epoch, decidedly earlier than the Mahabharata and the Ramayana. The above refers to a period which preceded the advent of the ' Bharatas,' referred to in the " Rig Veda."

The ' Atharva ' Veda mentioning as remote tribes, not only the *Ghandharis*, but also the *Maghadas* (in whose Kingdom the *Kashis*, along with the *Kosalas*, subsequently merged), establishes the great antiquity of the Kingdom of the Kashis.

The extreme sorrow and unwillingness of such a venerable sage as *Agasthya*, (Vasishta's brother), when he had to leave Benares, having undertaken to perform a task for the Dêvas, which necessitated his sojourn towards the *Vindyas*, may be better read in the following brief extract from *Kashi Khand*, than being told.

गंगा त्रिकालं परिसेवितामया श्रीविश्वनाथोपि सदाविलोकितः ।
यात्राः कृतास्ताः प्रतिपर्वसर्वतः कोयं विपाको ममविघ्नहेतुः ॥
मातर्विशालाक्षि भवानि मङ्गले ज्येष्टेशिसौ भाग्यविधानसुन्दरि ।
विश्वे विधे विश्वभुजे नमोऽस्तुते श्रीचित्रघण्ठे विकटे चदुर्गिके ॥
साक्षिण्यएताः किल काशिदेवताः श्रृण्वंतुनस्वार्थमहं व्रजाम्यतः ।
अभ्यर्थितो देवगणैः करोमिकिं परोपकाराय नाकं विधीयते ॥

Kasi Khand V. 41, 42, 43.

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इत्थं विलप्य बहुशःसमुनिस्त्वगस्त्यस्तत्क्षौञ्चं युगवदेह अबलासहायः ।
मूर्च्छामवाप महतां विरहीव जल्पन्हाकाशि काशि पुनरेहिच देहिद्यष्टिम् ॥

Kasi Khand V. 50.

Further, the temple of Agasthya Lingam and Agasthya Kûpa, near Dasâswamedh, Ghat, are living evidences of this venerable sage's long residence in Kashi.

The story of Druva's journey to Kashi, under instructions of the Supreme Intellect, after his successful penance in the Madhu-vana, is another popular story, coming from very remote ages.

"Of its great antiquity," says Mr. H. R Neville, I.C.S, in the District Gazetteer Vol. XXVI, "there can be no doubt, and it seems certain that the place was one of the earliest outposts of the Aryan immigration. Abundance of tradition is to be found in the ancient Hindu Scriptures, and every thing points to the existence of a popular city on this spot at a very remote period."

Mr. Vincent Smith, late I.C.S., author of 'The Early History of India' says in his valuable contribution to The Imperial Gazetteer Vol. II, "Some of the places mentioned in the most ancient stories, such as Benares and Broach (Bharoch) are important cities to this day.

"Of the antiquity of Benares", says Mr. E. B. Havell, A.R.C.A., Principal of the Government School of Art, Calcutta, "there can be hardly any question. From its peculiar situation on the banks of a splendid river, with its eastern boundary converted by the current into a magnificent natural amphitheatre, facing the rising sun, it is not un-reasonable to conjecture that even before the Aryan tribes established themselves in the Ganges valley, Benares may have been a great centre of Primitive Sun-worship and that the special sanctity with which the Brahmins have invested the city is only a tradition of those primeval days, borrowed, with so many of their rites and symbols, from their Turanian predecessors."

"We may picture Benares in the later Vedic times as one of the first Aryan Settlements in the Ganges Valley—a clearing in the primeval forest, perhaps first occupied by the Dravidians or Kolarians."

But, Rev. Sherring would rather wish to be told distinctly, as to "When it (Benares) was first built, and by what prince or patriarch," and failing to find a definite answer from the so-called dark ages, says it "is altogether unknown;" though, with the same breath, he continues to observe "It is indisputably a place of great antiquity and may even date from the time when the Aryan race first spread itself over Northern India. Although such a supposition is incapable of direct proof, yet, the sacred city, must undoubtedly, be reckoned amongst the primitive cities founded by this people. * * * But, of its great antiquity, stretching back through the dim ages of early Indian History, far into the clouds and mists of the Vedic and pre-historical periods, there is no question".

Kâsî, blessed as it was with such singular advantages as have already been observed, rose rapidly into an inexhaustive mine of universal interest, enriching the pure minds of the multiflying members of the early Aryans, with ever-beneficial denotations of the early Vêdas and the later Vêdic hymns. Kâsî was Mother India's nursing cradle that rocked the primitive habits and ideas of early Aryans into the sturdy, warlike ways and manners of the later heroes of our great epics, and into the cosmogenous philosophy of the later expounders of the Upanishads. We owe to our primeval sages, the Vêdas,

the Brâhmanas, and the Upanishads, the most precious of the richest of legacies ever bequeathed. The Vêdas refer not only to a period anterior to the Aryans' first entry into India, but also to the first stage of their establishment in the Brahmavarta, the pure nature worship of the original Aryans being its main feature. The later Brâhmanas and the Upanishads embodying the sacrificial rites and rituals and a series of early philosophical discussions, belong to a subsequent evolutionary period of tribal movements into the Gangetic valley.

These incomparable and invaluable gems of the early Aryan seers and thinkers, form the adamantine foundation of the huge fabric of Hinduism, that has successfully withstood not only the rare tests of several long centuries, but has also baffled many a rude and merciless blasts of sweeping tempests that almost shook its massive superstructure and even threatened to lay bare its very foundation. The extraordinary and keen insight of the primeval sages into the future, as exhibited by many of their universally popular works, might have suggested to their superior intellect the framing of social and political laws and regulations besides, to preserve their beloved generations from corruption. Drilled and tutored by such rigid and careful ancestors, into a body of systematic and true sons of the soil, the Gangetic Aryans were not lacking in that noble spirit of maintaining the inherited prestige of their forefathers.

Thus preserved and nurtured did the few Aryans, that originally occupied the Brahmavarta and subsequently the Gangetic Valley—the chosen Kingdom of the Kashis-grew into a nation, supplemented and augmented by fresher Aryan immigrants and the Dravidian and Turanian occupants of newer colonies. We must here observe with an expression of gratitude, that the indomitable Visvamitra, the great warrior chief and leader of the liberal party of the Early Aryans, successfully worked up the rapid development of the early Aryans into a nation of the Hindus, and their exclusive primitive worship into a universal religion of Hinduism. Visvamithra had to tide against the stagnant and deep influence of Vashista, the renowned brahmin priest and head of the aristocratic Aryans of Brahmavarta.

Visvamitra's undertaking the early training of the young Dâsarathies and his successful tour with them through the primeval jungles inhabited by fearful Rakshasas, until he reached the Janakpuri, where he settles the marriage of Rama, the boy hero, and several other similar references, establish beyond doubt, the truth of our conviction.

At any rate, like every other nation, the early Hindus had also to pass through the necessary stages of internal party strifes, ere they attained the unique position so much spoken of in the early Sanskrit Literature. When we have thus fathomed the depth of the unique importance of Kashi, we find the miraculous powers of the underlying principles that hold, in such a subtle and mysterious manner, the religious knots of the millions of Hindus.

" The Hindu ever beholds the city in one peculiar aspect, as a place of spotless purity and heavenly beauty, where the spiritual eye may be delighted and the heart may be purified." *Rev. M. A. Sherring.*

The fact of Kashi having survived in all its original purity, sublimity and heavenly beauty through countless ages since its birth sufficiently demonstrates its rare sanctity, so highly referred to in the Puranas, delighting the spiritual eye and purifying the firm heart of all India. Her illustrious name is ever gratefully remembered from father to son and the desire to visit its holy earth and to bathe in its refreshing Ganga, has become so intense that it is a general belief " Even death in Kasi" leads to salvation for it is one of the seven noted cities of pilgrimage, as mentioned in the *Khashi Khand*.

काशीं कान्ती च मायाख्या त्वयोध्याद्वारवत्यपि ।
मथुराऽवन्तिकाचैताः सप्तपुर्योऽत्र मोक्षदाः। VI. 68 ॥

Leaning back for a while, peeping once more through the ages that had intervened, since the first occupation of Kashi by the Aryans, let us enquire if they anticipated their beloved colony in the valley of the Ganges, to ever become so prominent in history, as to exercise its majestic sway over the vast people of India; or, if they started the colony as a social, political or religious rendezvous ?

We do not feel justified in recording any guess reply that passes through our enquiring mind regarding the first question. But clear circumstantial evidence amounting to a sincere conviction asserts that the original founders who were aware of the risks the people were confronted with, by the peculiar social and political conditions then prevalent, might have provided against probable complications by the establishment of such a cosmopolition centre, as Kashi had subsequently proved to be.

We believe that Kashi, first an ordinary colony of an enterprising tribe, was gradually developed into a powerful centre, resplendant with social, political and religious springs or fountain heads, able enough to fertilize the rapidly spreading area of the people. The hundreds of faiths and those that professed them who presented themselves at that period following the completion of the tribal movements, needed to be grouped together into one great community of beliefs. with common sentiments. Kashi had creditably accomplished this noble deed of collecting every sect and caste of all grades of society, into its holy area and of exacting their homages on one common platform, on the banks of the Ganges.

Let us now trace the original site and extent of Kashi, contrasting them with the present ones and try to establish their identity, which many doubt.

We have already observed that the Kashis first established themselves in the Gangetic valley, where the natural amphitheatre caused by the current of the Ganges formed the eastern boundary while the Varana and Assi marked its extremties on the north and south respectively. The west was not definitely marked, yet, we may safely assume that towards that direction the colony did not proceed very far until more recent times. The Puranas, undoubtedly of a respectable antiquity, have also fixed the extent of Vârânasi in the same manner.

" The city proper is built on a high ridge of *Kankar*, which forms the northern bank of the Ganges, for a distance of some four miles. In spite of the slight curve this

ridge is sufficiently strong to resist the force of the river, with the result that Benares is one of the few great cities which have not shifted their site within historical times.
" *H. R. Neville.*

The forcible statement of Mr. Neville, coupled with that of Mr. Havell, (quoted elsewhere), not only indicate the present site of Benares along the river bank but also establish beyond doubt the identity of the original site with the present one.

Whereas, Rev. Sherring, in his note towards the close of his " Sacred City of the Hindus ", concludes, " that the Benares of today is by no means identical with the Benares of their remote fore-fathers. He finds during his visit and examination of the " lands lying on the banks of the Ganges to the north-east of the river Barna," brick and stone debris and occasional pieces of sculptured stones or mounds of bricks &c. scattered over an area of about five miles by three-quarters, along the river bank, and establishes with an amount of certainty " that here a great city once stood, " which he says must be " the original city of the Pre-Buddhistic and early Buddhistic eras." He continues " Beyond the northern extremity of the remains of the earlier city is a series of mounds, also covered with debris, tending in a north-westerly direction, where formerly forts or towns existed. I think it not unlikely, that, in a far distant age, the connection of the primitive city of Benares with Saranath was along the course of these mounds," though he is aware of the fact, from the Ceylon Records, that Saranath existed as a separate city. Even the considerable distance of Saranath from the present city, which ends about half a mile to the South of the Barna, does not prevent Rev. Sherring from supposing that Benares in early days, was, mainly on the northern side of the Barna ;" the scanty brick and stone debris referred to already, towards Saranath, are enough for him to decide that at some early epoch " a union more or less intimate existed between Saranath and Benares," which does not necessarily require that the main city ought to have been only beyond the Barna. Further, his urging that the connection between Saranath and Benares must be traced only on the northern extremity of Benares, as he puts it, is another point in favour of the improbability of his supposition. He urges, on the strength of his suppositions indicated above, that it is utterly absurd " to derive the meaning of Benares as between Barna and Assi, and adds that " Banarasi has nothing whatever to do with the most ancient city of Benares, and, as applied to it, would be a ludicrous misnomer."

" The Panchkosi road or sacred boundary of Modern Benares—regarded by many natives as of immense antiquity—is no older than the city which it encompasses, and must also be assigned to a comparatively recent date," is the next conclusion, he arrives at, in his own way of arguing.

It is highly probable that Rev. Sherring was not aware of the tendancy of the Hindus to colonize nearest to any available water-course, as may be verified by many cities and towns having crowded houses, palaces and Ghats on river banks. Further, the existence of all the Buddhistic Viharas and Monasteries, in and out of India—not in the crowded cities but in its outskirts—must have suggested the invariable habit of its builders, which justifies their position. in Saranath and its surroundings, instead of in

the main city, which must have been not above the Barna but below it. Literary tradition with historical facts, in ancient Brahminic, Buddhistic or Jainic sacred books that took an acceptable shape about 500 B. C. coupled with the known tribal movements which were completed long before 600 B. C., commencing from twenty centuries before Christ, declare that Benares had existed, as a prominent city from time immemorial, with an amount of civilization and an influence of a rare and enviable character. That such a prominence in Benares induced Gautama Sakya Muni to start his preachings in Benares does not necessitate its practical annihilation by either Gautama, the Tolerant, preaching but a new religion, to a rather very highly cultured Aryas, or by his not so powerful contemporary patrons or by those most tolerant monarchs that flourished subsequeutly.

Asoka of Maghada and Kanishka of Kashmir, the most prominent rulers of Hindustan and the most forward of the bold upholders of Buddhism, were, quite unlike the Mohamadan raiders of later centuries, the most tolerant of Chakravarthies that allowed all creeds to live side by side of each other without being molested or persecuted.

"Both the Jains and Buddhistic religions arose either in that (Maghadan) Kingdom or on its borders, and Brahminical Hinduism from time immemorial has always possessed a stronghold in the neighbouring City of Benares."

For Asoka, the royal backbone of Buddhisn "did not force his (new) creed upon his children" as he used to call his subjects.

He (Asoka) fully recognized the right of all sects and creeds to live and let live, and did not hesitate to adopt a policy of concurrent endowment. In respect of this active toleration, his conduct was in accordance with that of most monarchs of ancient India.

Asoka, whose highest claim in the annals of history, was the transferring of Buddhism from a merly local sect in the Gangetic valley, to be one of the greatest religions in the world was not alone in maintaining a tolerant policy, *re* : the creeds of his subjects, for Kanishka and Harsha have also adapted themselves in the popular footsteps of their illustrious predecessors.

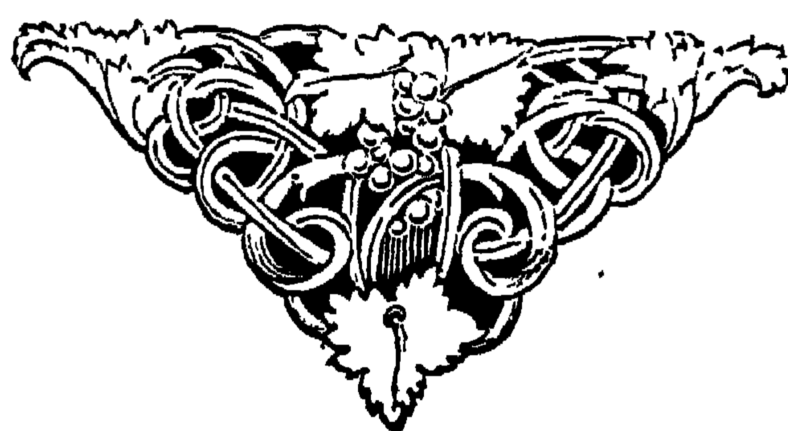
There was, yet, another fact to be remembered, viz :—"Liberty of Conscience," of individuals or bodies, never to be suppressed ; perfect freedom being a birth-right, as it were, scrupulously provided for, was always enjoyed, in India, until the advent of the Mohamadans when this previlege was sacrileged by "torture, bloodshed and judicial murder". Such a procedure was neither justifiable nor necessary, in the opinion of the Aryan Lawgivers and few Indian Monarchs swerved from such an observance. On the other hand, as had been observed already, perfect freedom of thought and deed (Religious of course) and a free exposition of philosophical researches were never grudged. It is hardly realizable, under the circumstances, that any force or unnescessary influence might have been employed to either destroy the then existing site of Benares or in any manner to disfigure its renowned sanctity whatever new religious wave had blown over its surface or neighbourhood.

Further, *Fa Hian*, the Chinese pilgrim that visited India about the fifth century A. D found the temple located in the Park of the "Immortals Deer" ten *lis* to the north-east of the city, *Po Lo Nai.* He need not have spoken of the City and Saranath separately, had they been merged, one into the other, as Rev. Sherring imagines; and the distance of ten *lis* between the two places, (the Buddhistic and the Hindu cities), in his time, might have been subsequently increased as the city receded from the banks of the Barna, in later times.

Hiouen Thsaing, the next Chinese Traveller in India, while Harshachandra was the supreme Indian Monarch, who had the privelege of enjoying the rulers' personal attention, defines more clearly that " the kingdom of *Po-lo-ni-sse* (Varanassi, Benares), is about four thousand *lis* (667 miles) in circuit. To the west, near the Ganges, is the capital, which is from eighteen to nineteen *lis* (three miles and upwards) long, and from five to six *lis*, (about one mile broad) * * * * * * Passing on about ten *lis* north-east from the river *Po-lo-ni-see* (Vârânassi) he reached the monastery of the Deer Park (the modern Saranath)

We here observe that *Hiouen Thsaing* too had to walk about two miles from the Vârânasi, ere he reached Saranath.

Many more evidences may be added to those already noticed, but for the limited sphere at our disposal, in favour of our firm conviction that the Benares of to-day represents the identical site of the Benares of our fore-fathers; though it will be absurd to ask the reader to imagine any great antiquity to many modern buildings that now adorn the city, bearing in mind the numberless Mahamadan devastations.



CHAPTER II.

ANCIENT HISTORY—THE PEOPLE AND THEIR CIVILIZATION.

Like the traditional Phœnix, modern Benares is but the ultimate survival of the numerous Mohamadan devastations, not to speak of the changes inflicted by long centuries, and, as such, who can say that the huge mansions that now adorn its most crowded parts along the Ganges, do not hide underneath invaluable ancient relics, which would, otherwise have convinced, beyond doubt, men like Rev. Sherring as to its great antiquity.

Coming out of the cruel hands of her Mohamadan rulers, and, slipping almost providentially, into that of a more just body, she had an unprecedented and a unique opportunity to heal herself, as best as she could, to her original prestige, during the last few tens of years.

Ere we dilate on the manifold advantages—not to speak of the rest and peace, she needed most—which she had been enjoying along with other cities and towns in the country, let us, for a while, reflect on its ancient history.

That it was founded ages before Christ, that the so-called traditional sages like Agasthya and heroes like Harischandra, Rama and Kristna, had revered her, and paid their saintly and royal homages to her, that her renowned kings' alliance was sought and secured by the heroes of the Mahabharata war, that great world-religionists had chosen her resplendent soil as the fittest centre to send forth their noble revelations from, that it had, during all ages, and despite hundreds of trials in later centuries at the hands of merciless autocrats, always vouchsafed the noble mission entrusted to her by her original founders—all these have been dealt with already at some length.

We will now proceed to observe, as far as the materials at our disposal, meagre as they are, would permit, to give a sketch of the progress, Kashi had made, since its first colonization, in religious, social, and political matters.

"Twenty-five centuries ago, at the least, it (Kashi) was famous."—says Rev. Sherring, and continues to observe, "when Babylon was struggling with Nineveh for supremacy, when Tyre was planting her colonies, when Athens was growing in strength, before Rome had become known, or Greece had contended with Persia, or Cyrus had added lustre to the Persian monarchy, or Nebuchadnezzer had captured Jerusalem, and the inhabitants of Juda had been carried into captivity, she had already risen to greatness, if not to glory. Nay, she may have heard of the fame of Solomon, and have sent her ivory, her apes, and her peacocks to adorn his palaces; while partly with her gold he may have overlaid the temple of the Lord."

The Aryans of the Kâşhis, must have attained a state of high eminence, at least in social and political matters, during the time of the great Mahabharata war, referred to

already, as to become worthy comrades of the renowned archers, Arjuna, Karna and others to fight against the masterly Dhrona and Bhishma. It is highly probable that the Kâshi Raja referred to in the memorable ancient fight for supremacy of feudal rights, took with him an excellent army of renowned warriors from the heroic valley of the Ganges.

A consideration, by the bye, of the universally accepted literary and philosophical merits of that renowned discourse between Arjuna (the human) and Krishna (the divine), bequeathed to us in the eighteen chapters of the little gem of an unique and authentic guide, The Bhagavat Gita—would demonstrate beyond doubt the high intellectual advancement of the noble nation that then lived in the Aryavartha (the much-beloved land of the Gangetic Valley).

We may safely conclude from the above observations, that the Hindus of the Mahabharat period, (whatever its date might have been, though we are forced to accept it to be about 1,500 years before Christ, in the face of many rather convincing local and foreign researches of eminent Indians and foreigners), had certainly reached that high state of refinement and civilization, both in public and private life, which have been so frequently and approvingly referred to by all the civilized nations of the world. It goes far beyond any trace of possible doubt that this advanced state must then have been several years in existance. Erom the Epic Period, we may peep deep, if necessary with the most scrutinizing and powerful modern telescope, into the so-called dark and misty ages of the later Vedic and Vedic Periods, to get a clear conception of the keen insight of the authors of those sacred treasures.

Without entering into not so profitable a discussion of the names and lives of such authors, were we simply to weigh the high literary—nay, far-seeing intellectual display of the Vedas, we cannot but arrive at the only recurring conclusion that the then advanced state must also belong, in its turn, to a still remote ante-vedic period.

To be assured, in this manner, that the earliest religion-expounders of the later Hindus, belonged to a far anterior period than the early Vedic, and that their keen insight into the future, ennobled them as the great seers; and to claim, more than all, an antiquity of such remoteness, are some of our common draw-backs, frequently spoken of by pre-possessed historians like Mr. Mill, the renowned author of "History of British India" wherein, "he pertinaciously pursued to prove that the institutions of the Hindus belong to the rudest and simplest form of society," Editor's note Vol. I. P. 180. The same impartial editor observes "As we see them in Manu comprehending an artificial system of monarchy and law, they must have been, according to Mr. Mill's own shewing (p. 177), the result of a gradual preparation and improvement. He is at variance with himself in the attempt here commenced. The auther of the Vedas. must have felt the necessity of a religious code for the guidance of his people and preservation of their religious observances, as then prevailed, which he embodied in the memorable Vedas in the earliest ages, far anterior to those traceable by modern historians. "The nation had" (then, evidently) "made considerable progress beyond the first and lowest stage of human society." is an admission of no small value being from the same historian above referred to, though not at all compatible with the views he had usually advocated.

"The sages of India were not in complete darkness. As we examine the earlier writings, the light was bright indeed contrasted with what came later. It is most instructive to notice the marked deterioration in the quality of the teaching, deities as described by the earlier sages being vastly better than their successors declare them to be," observes Mr. W. J. Wilkins, in his preface to the 'Hindu Mythology, Vedic and Puranic, who, unlike the advocates that magnify the good or the evil, gives a reliable account, abstaining himself rigidly from comments commendatory or condemnatory.

"As to the date of the Vedas, there is nothing certainly known. There is no doubt that they are amongst the oldest literary productions of the world." A valuable opinion of the impartial Mr. Wilkins, which, in its turn encourages us to be convinced of either Colebrookes date of the Vedas as before the 14th century B. C., or of Dr. Haug's which is about ten centuries earlier still.

The authors of the Hindu Codes of society or their laws and regulations for its proper conduct, were also systematized, as bequeathed to us, by our ancient seers, of course at a period later than the Vedic. It is not possible to conceive that a people in their rude state, could have felt the necessity of all binding and beneficial rules, unless we believe that they had then been living, since some years previous at least, in a state of refinement which valued order and system, and which desired possible harmony in all their affairs. They had framed codes for the regulation and up-keep of not only their progressing society, but also, as is well known, for a properly constituted monarchy to supervise the proper application of such laws and to preserve their valuable acquisition, *Sthâvara* and *Jangama*, from foreign aggressions.

Thus preserved and guided by the early-Vedic and post-Vedic seers, did the Epic Aryans, after their very glorious period which certainly ought to have continued in a far anterior age, through long centuries unknown to modern historians, bequeath to the early Puranic Hindus, their esteemed legacies. The subsequent development of the noble descendants of the Epic heroes, we must admit, though to our great regret, had to contend against the unscrupulous and all confusing supremacy of the Brahmin Priesthood, that sowed the seeds of later dissensions, and curbed the expected advancement which might otherwise have outshone that of any other nation in the world.

The unsullied and heroic Aryans of the Epic Aryavartha, grouped though they were, by four distinct classes, distinguishing but their respective duties, as allotted by their confederacy, had conducted themselves admirably in their ages, not one of their classes claiming the peculiar aristocratic monopoly that the Puranic Brahmins exercised over the destinies of the later Hindus. We are aware that many of the earlier literary productions were the outcome of not only Brahmins, but also of Kshatriyas, and that all the Dhwijas, having then common understanding and rights as to the possession and exposition of the sacred scriptures, co-operated one with the other in an amicable manner. We cannot, at the same time, lose sight of the later party strife that then started between the first two classes, Brahmins and Kshatriyas, headed by the aristocratic Brahmarishi Vashishta on the one side, and the progressive Kshatriya leader Viswâmitra, on the other. We have also been told of the success of the latter in acquiring for his

own class, as well as for the neglected ones of other or newer classes, a sort of medium, if not possession of equal rights in religious and other vital matters. We see already, at this time, not a race in their rudimentary stage, to accept and obey unquestioning, whatever was offered to or withheld from them, but a considerably advanced nation that understood what was good or bad to their society. and would not bear any undue advantage being monopolised by any one or particular class, to the detriment of their common interest.

It is probable that the progressive attitude, adopted by the liberal Visvâmitra had a natural re-action, with its usual severity—not uncommon on such turn-scale—in the Brahmins being helped to that unique position of all-supremacy, which valued trust, unfortunately, less capable Brahmins, misused or misappropriated with selfish motives, in later days.

We have now come down, yet, to that commendable age, glorying not only in bare inherited warlike heroism, but also in the ever-memorable days when Indian Literature and Science, backed by Royalty, reached that high state of eminence, which had always surprised the civilized nations of the world. The greatest literary men, original scientists, later law-givers, philosophers and world-religionists, of whom India is rightly proud of, adorned the blessed Hindustan, during this renowned period; when also, great and powerful monarchs held supreme sway of all lands from sea to sea, and from the Vindyas to the Himalayas, not to speak of several independant states in the southern peninsula.

We shall make a few pleasant observations and trace superficially the growth of the people and their kingdoms, referred to already, to have an idea of their civilizations and refinement and their religion, shaped as it was by the new tendency of the Priests and their Puranas.

In the absence of a chronological historical sketch, which the highly philosophic Aryan mind cared not to record, in the manner in which modern historians would have it, we have done our best to summarise from the very earliest times of the first Aryan settlement in the Brahmavartha to the time of the Puranas, when memorable events of a more tangible nature, coupled with contemporary foreign records, are not far to seek.

As the new Puranic curtain rises. we find ourselves before a new set of sceneries as represented by the priestly or Brahminic literature which contrasts glaringly with the uniformly milder, yet truly heroic scene we have been used to observe in the Vêdic and Epic periods.

The early Aryans worshipped, in their simple manner, the Elements, though, of course the lengthy and tedious Vêdic sacrifices were also performed more frequently to keep the Gods in good temper. We nowhere hear of or see the Vêdic Aryans repairing to the much later temples or worshipping images, as we find in the period in which we now are entering. The sacrificial altars were then put up anew in each case in some open and convenient space, and the rich sacrificer was the sole enjoyer of all its results, as he alone met its entire expense and trouble. Very probably, every headsman

at least of the original tribes had observed this method of securing prosperity to those under him. Nor, do we hear much of the *thapas*, or self-mortification, so commonly met with in this period, though a few *Thapasvis*, who were, more or less, venerable seers and great thinkers or renowned sages, the reputed leaders of clans, or the authors of ancient sanscrit lore of a rather pure and unsullied nature.

During this intervening period and that anterior to the rise of Buddhism in India, we notice the popularity not so much of the ancient and Vêdic sacrifice or the later temple and *Vighrahârâdhana*, but of the self-mortifying *thapas*—an extraordinary display of physical and will power—practised evidently with the object of securing super-human faculties, to be able to observe and understand better views of life and its objects.

While the earlier Aryan settlers busied themselves more with the primitive worship of ths elements, by sacrifices, that favoured their prosperity in conquests and in life worldly, the later *thapaswis* (sages) advanced a step forwards, through strength of will and through great concentrated application of human faculties, to grasp the higher theology of identifying the Vedic and other Gods, one with the other, and gradually establishing the highest philosophy of *one* Supreme *Paramâtman*, the all-pervading soul, in continued harmony with the teaching of the *Upanishads*. We must not omit to observe, at the same time, that the Brahmins, as the sole custodians of the Vedas, were triumphantly advancing simultaneously, almost monopolising within their own limited circle, of course, sparingly perhaps, and for clear reasons, with the Kshatriyas as well, all the then known knowledge of religion, politics, society &c. They, further, shaped it as best it suited them, though to the detriment of common interests. They had almost abandoned the highly expensive Vedic sacrifices, which no more offered them the tempting field it once did, and had taken to dictate to the nation—as the lawful mediators between God and man—the worship of heroes, and hundreds of Gods and demi-Gods, besides the equally or perhaps more numerous ceremonials, and had enjoined the strict observance besides of all such ceremonies, under their own priestly guide and presidency. As the all-monopolising Brahmins continued in this manner to exercise an unpopular supremacy and authority over the common rights of not only religion, but also of society, politics &c., the sensitive suffering classes thus being neglected and living an almost exclusive life far beyond the hallowed pale of the jealous and aristocratic Brahminism, were, in their own turn, striving to find newer or better paths for themselves.

We now see, as already observed, besides the monopolising Vêdic teachers of Brahmins, there had slowly come into existence a class of thinkers or sages or *thapaswis*, who, by their extreme methods and practises of life, had become the reputed teachers of noble philosophy and the expounders of the religion of human life and its objects in connection with the Supreme Being.

The other class were composed of what we may call the dissenters of Brahmin priesthood or supremacy, whose subversion was under the circumstances, impossible.

This latter class was rapidly increasing in number, striving in their own independent manner, and engaging themselves in a direction similar to that of the *thapaswis*. In their preliminary endeavours, they educated themselves from whatever sources

available, and wandered the country, in bodies of masters and pupils, after the solution of the same life question. In fact, an universal craving after the true causes of the troubles in life and the ways of escaping such miseries, were amongst the prevailing ideas of the broader thinkers of the day, though thousands were still groaning under the tyrannical Brahmin supremacy which enforced unnecessary ceremonials and observances almost darkening the very existence.

We may here observe, that the new tendency of at least the then thinking Indians, was in a way shaping the national destiny, which exhibited itself in a clearer form in the near future.

The sages and lay-thinkers, referred to, wandered about the land preaching or teaching what appeared to them to be good and developed a higher method of right understanding and right living—not to speak of the renunciation and self-mortification and of the noted unselfish application of such or other ascetics and penancers.

It was evidently about this promising period that prominent and great thinkers of all classes came forward as did the great renouncer of the Sakhya Royalty. That not only acknowledged teachers adorned this period but that they also found ready and willing lay-hearers and dutiful pupils and disciples, in the ever-resplendent Gangetic valley, establishes, beyond doubt, the positive fact that the country had then developed itself to such an age, augmented and propelled, of course, by the high-handedness of the Brahmins, and their idiosynchrosy of the then prevailing animistic and pantheistic religion.

Having thus traced that the ancient Aryan innocent element worship, passing through an intermediary stage of mixed religion of the Aryan and original pre-Aryan settlers, descended to the Puranic *Vigrahârâdhana* in the temple, followed by numberless, cumbersome and meaningless ceremonials of Brahmin priesthood, and then slowly and steadily developed a higher notion of philosophical understanding of life and its objects, let us now attempt to give a short account of the people and their kingdoms at this important period.

The whole country of Northern India had, by this time, been occupied by the several tribes into which the first and subsequent Aryan invaders had distributed themselves. Not less than sixteen such tribes each under its own central government are mentioned about the period in question. They are the

Anga,	Vajji,	Kuru,	Assaka,
Magadha,	Mallâ,	Pânchâla,	Avanti,
Kâshi,	Ceti,	Matsya,	Ghândhâra,
Kosala,	Vamsâ,	Surasêna,	Kâmboja,

of which, Kâshi, Kuru, Pânchâla, Avanti and Ghândhâra, are more or less of ancient origin and of Epic and ante-Epic fame.

The Kâshis, as we have noticed already, are perhaps the earliest branch of the original settlers on the banks of the Saraswati. They had settled and prospered in and around Kâshi or Benares, in the most luxuriant Gangetic valley, and, in course of time,

established themselves into an independent and powerful kingdom. But, about the time we are now in, we find that the first kingdom of the Bhâratas had fallen to a very low level in the political scale. Its independence had been shaken evidently by the growing contending powers around it—the powerful Kosalas from the adjoining north-west and the rising Magadhas immediately below their own territory in the lower valley of the Ganges, vieing, one with the other, to swallow up the prosperous ancient Kâshi.

A little before the seventh century B. C., we hear of frequent successful invasions of Kâshi by the Kosalas, under their warlike kings *Vanka, Dabbasêna*, and lastly the victorious *Kamsa*, who enjoyed, for ever afterwards, the glory of being greeted by his people as the "Conqueror of Kâshi" Thus the ancient kingdom of Kâshi lost its independence in the early years after the Epic, and which it never afterwards had a chance of regaining owing to the jealous rise, in the immediate future, of the Magadhas on the one side, contending with the established supremacy of the Kosalans, on the other.

In fact, Kâshi had become incorporated into Kosala, as a whole, and continued to be ruled by Kosalan Viceroys, till about the days when matrimonial connections between the Magadhan and Kosalan Royalties, carried this blessed and rich kingdom as a deserving *Sridhana* to Kosala Dêvi, the loving daughter of *Maha Kosala* and the devoted queen of *Bimbisara* of Magadha.

When Ajatasatru, son of Bimbisara by another wife killed the latter, at the instigation of Dêvadatta, then the rival and opponent of Gauthama, and when the Kosala Dêvi also died of grief caused thereby, her beloved brother *Prasenajit* (Passenadi) who was then the all-powerful Kosalan Monarch, enraged at this act of Ajatasatru, confiscated forthwith the kingdom of Kâshi.

In the war that ensued between Magadha and Kosala, following the re-annexation of Kâshi by the Kosalan ruler, Ajatasatru, though successful in the beginning, was finally overpowered and taken prisoner and was not released until he had relinquished his claim to Kâshi, though his wife (daughter of the Kosalan king subsequently married) brought it back as a wedding gift.

We have evidence to gather that though this final disposal of Kâshi was subsequent to the propagation of his new religion by Gautama Sakya Sinha, it had undoubtedly remained under foreign domination during at least several generations previous to the rising into power of *Prasenajit* to the kingdom of his father *Mahakosala*, since the time of Kamsa, its couqueror.

Thus, the once proud races of heroic descendants of ancient Bharatavarsha, that gloriously fought in the great war, led by their powerful king, have fallen into insignificance, cornered by changed circumstances, and have become the subject tribes of the then ruling Kosalas and latterly of the Magadhas; yet, we may safely conclude that, though it continued to be under the acknowledged supremacy of either the Kosalas, or the Magadhas, its importance at least as an ancient and independent kingdom was not lost sight of, for the memory of its past independence was always fresh in the peoples' mind, as confirmed by its frequent mention as such in the later Buddhistic literatures

and by the clear account of the Chinese pilgrims *Fa Hian* and *Hiouen Thsaing*, who travelled in India several centuries after the rise of Buddhism.

We see that, in the middle of the seventh century B.C., *Mahakosala* ruled as the supreme sovereign of all the territory lying between the Himalayas and the Ganges, and from the Kosala and Ramgunga rivers on the west to the Gundak on the east.

Besides the sixteen independent powers mentioned already, who were constantly engaged at internecine wars, for supremacy one over the other, there were, besides, several smaller, yet, independent confederacies like those of the Sakyas, and Kolians. A little to the east of the Kosalas, were the Sakyas, and Kolians, who established themselves, one on each side of the Rohini, equally subjeet to the Magadha-Kosala rivalry, so prevalent at the times.



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CHAPTER III.

BUDDHA AND BUDDHISM.

At this memorable period when history records a series of successive feudal wars, between the various tribes occupying the plains of Hindustan; when the several clans into which the original Aryans had divided themselves, were once more trying to re-unite by exercise of supreme power, one over the other; and when the depressed and more thinking classes, following the paths of recognised teachers or sages or philosophers, were striving to find newer and better paths than those shewn by the intolerable Brahmin supremacy and priesthood;—it was now, we hear a glorious Sun rising on the banks of the Rohini, enriching first the pleasant grove of Lumbini, and subsequently the hearts of the delighted citizens of Kapilavastu and its worthy Ruler.

The old Suddhodhana was enraptured at the birth of a Redeemer of his family and a reliever, at a near future, of his own burdens of Royalty, though he could have little doubted, that his young babe, growing into manhood, would ever renounce him and his rich legacies. The people of Kapilavastu rightly gloried themselves in joyous festivities and decoration of the town in honor of the birth of their future Sovereign. The better thinkers of the neighbourhood, the sages and philosophers, who had been roaming in uncertain paths through long and troublous times, foresaw, in the birth of this Prince, a brightening dawn, in whose advanced bright-sun-shine, they hoped to bask, ere long, an ever-lasting bliss.

This Gautama child, named *Siddhârta*, was brought up with all care and attention, peculiar to the royalty of his parentage, and gradually grew into lovely boyhood, when, by his superior and perspective intellect and extraordinary power, he is said to have excelled, in later years, many a youth of his day, in even the manly and Kshatriyan exercises, which he was supposed to have neglected.

He was married to his cousin *Subadhra* otherwise known as *Yasodhara*, while quite young, and he passed his pleasant youth in all the luxuries of the Court with his dear wife and companion.

As he advanced in age and his inner man grew more inquisitive to know the causes of worldly miseries or happiness, he frequently retired into his private gardens to taste the holy calm of a solitary consultation with his better conscience. The incessant woes of worldly life and the desire to know its causes, and to seek a remedy for the same, grew to be the predominant ideas in his unsettled mind.

While engaged in one of such solitary musings in a garden, he was announced of the birth of his son, in the palace, this pensive young Gautama is supposed to have exclaimed, "This is a new and strong tie I shall have to break,"—a spontaneous and

true confession of a person in a dilemma and unriped decision, about a vital point. That he was at the time seriously contemplating to find a way of securing emancipation from sins, and recurring births, was exhibited when he sent round his own necklace to a girl, in the joyous crowd that greeted his return to the palace, exclaiming. "Happy the father, happy the mother, and happy the wife of such a son and husband," which Gautama understood to mean a theory analagous to his own.

Even as the great seers foresaw in the birth of *Siddhârta*, their own and the world's Redeemer, so perhaps, the birth of a son, helped Gautama to decide forthwith the *Great Renunciation*, which might not have been possible or might have been delayed, had he laboured under the new tie, for, it might sooner have become a stronger obstacle.

The birth of his son—a source of worldly happiness as is generally understood, was a new and attractive chain of world's peculiar recurrence, strong enough to keep him tied to worldly aspirations with greater responsibilities, had he not, with a stronger firmness and resolution, that was ripening in him, and with a bold stroke, cut asunder its enticing knots, though after a hurried and last glance at the happy "nest of all his past joy and love and affection."

" In that one eventful moment, in the silent darkness of that night, he renounced for ever his wealth and power and position, and more than all this, the affections of a happy home, the love of a young wife, and of a tender infant now lying unconscious in sleep. He renounced all this and rode away that night, to become a poor student, and an homeless wanderer." R. C. Dutt.

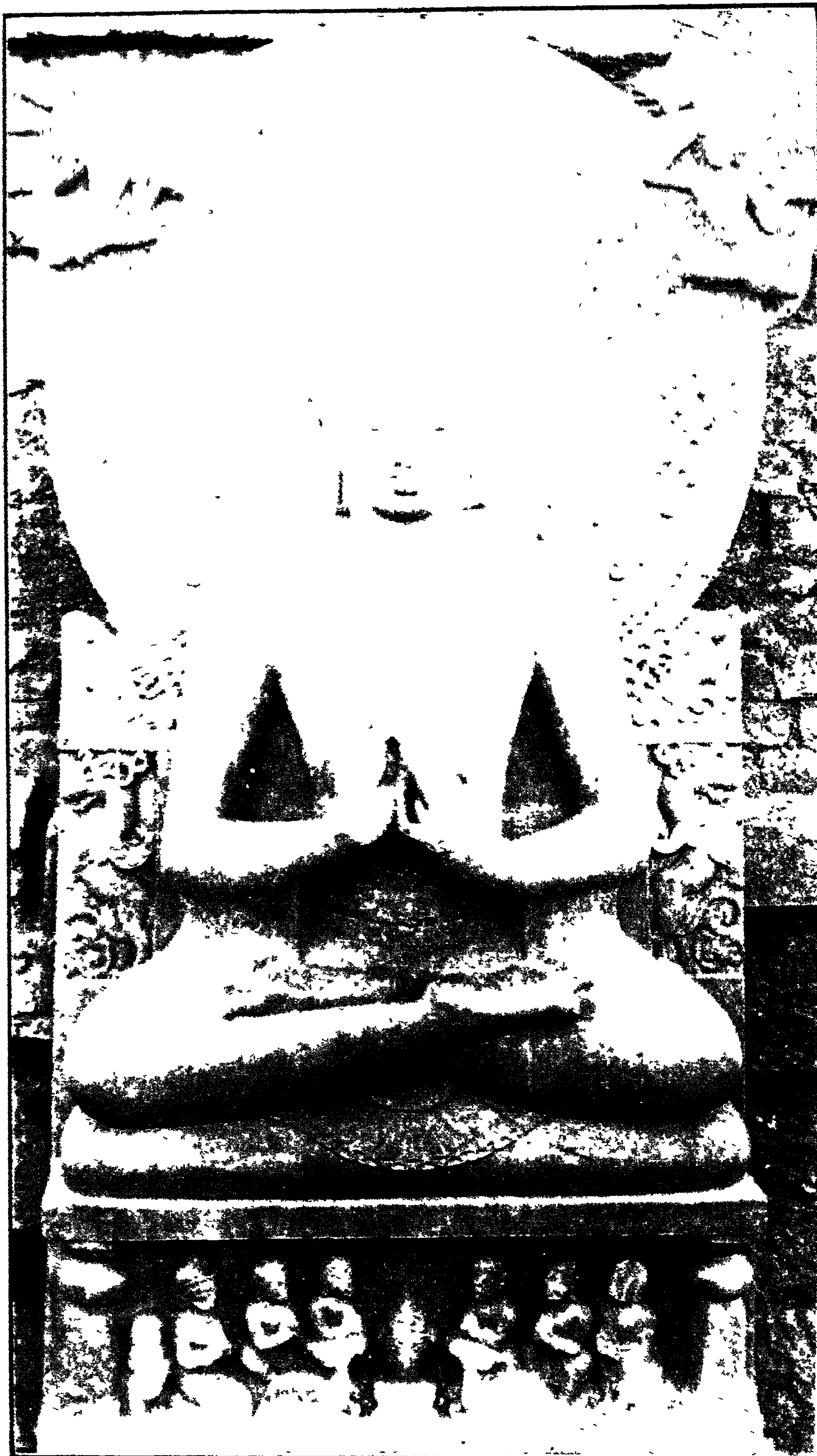
He first sought the help of *Alâra*, and then of *Udraka*, two noted philosophers that lived in the caves of the hills near the 'Chitrakûta' Not being satisfied with all the philosophy that the then seers had to teach him, he repaired to the adjoining forests of *Uruvela*, where, helped by five staunch disciples, he underwent, for a period of six long years, such hard penance and self-mortification, that thousands were attracted round him, to learn the super-human intelligence that he might have gained. But Gautama had nothing to give them, and, unlike several others under the circumstances, when he confessed his ignorance of owning any extraordinary powers, the big crowd of spectators and students soon dispersed, including his own devoted disciples, and he found himself left alone.

With troubled mind and deserted companions or admirers, he wandered alone, on the banks of the Niranjara, for sometime, wavering, once more, without being able to find his path.

He, finally, but not till after a great struggle of mingled feelings of home-sickness and of immortal goal, sat, under the shade of a tree, to contemplate, on the real path.

His determined mind, piercing through the misty worldly temptations and beguiling happiness, saw clearly before him the bright sun-shine of ever-lasting truth, exhibiting his future path to salvation, in bright colors.

Gautama saw, in the glorious light of truth that dawned before him, what no one else had seen or cared to acknowledge, before him. His unique application, unprecedented as it was, unearthed the vain and transient garb of things worldly, while it enabled him to realize the magnanimity of living a blameless record life as the only extinguisher of recurring existences. The question of the higher metaphysics or philosophy of the soul and its superhuman connections did not appear to him as immediately concerning man's existence on earth. Self-culture was the ideal ambition of Siddhârta, towards which alone, in all his subsequent lessons, he laid great stress, to his disciples.



BUDDHA PREACHING
Discovered at Saranath, 1904.

Liberated though he was, our Sakhya-Sinha, yet conceived the noble object of popularising his own convictions for the redemption of mankind. Tempted purely by his benevolent heart, he forthwith proceeded to Benares, then, the strong-hold of Hinduism; sowed the seeds of mercy and contentment amongst his willing hearers; and in all earnestness, he declared himself, as the bold expounder of the true and pure religion.

Men and women from all quarters flocked round the pious teacher, heard him reveal a pure and noble path, learnt the futility of unnecessary and fruitless asceticism, and followed his footsteps to enter "the gates of immortality."

The five disciples of the *Uruvela* forest were the first besought converts of Gautama, to find whom, as we have observed already, he went to Benares, the Sacred City, for it was there that he found the expediency of exhibiting himself to the world as Buddha, the Enlightened "and it was" in the hermitage of -Migadâya, "the Supreme wheel of the Empire of Truth, has been set rolling by the Blessed One, that wheel which not by Sarman, or Brâhman, not by any Gods, not by any Brahma or Mâra, not by any one in the Universe, can ever be turned back"—*Angutta Nikayya.*

In less than five months, Gautama found the creed rising into popularity and and he thereupon decided to extend it into the neighbourhood and adjoining provinces, towards which he employed his devoted disciples who now numbered over sixty.

Leaving *Yasa*, a rich Benares Banker's son and his trusted disciple, in charge of his Mission in Benares, Gautama himself went to the forests of *Uruvela*, where he converted the Kâsyapas, the renowned Brahmin philosophers of the day. The success that attended Gautama, in Rajagriha, when he presented himself before Bimbisara, the King, with the Kâsyapas after him, needs special mention, for the latter embracing the creed was more than convincing. The Magadhan king, ever afterwards, continued to be the trusted friend and patron of Gautama.

His subsequent sojourn to Kapilavastu, at his father's request, and the influence he exercised over his own clan, secured him many valuable acquisitions to his creed. His stay in the suburban groves of Kapilavasthu, the visit of his Royal old Father and relatives at his retired hermitage, his entering the town the following day begging alms from the people, with a train of devoted disciples at his back, the king's rebuke of Gautama for his begging, as unbecoming the custom of his warlike ancestors, and his simple and magnanimous reply that he owed his origin to the line of former Buddhas and not to any warrier clan, his reception in the Palace and the greetings of his family members and royal retinue. may not be out of place to mention even in this hurried sketch.

Yet, the sympathetic interview that Gautama, the Buddha, the Merciful, was pleased to bestow on his once loving *Yasodhara*, who beheld, to her great surprise, "not her Lord and Prince, but a recluse with shaven head and yellow robes"—and the pathetic sequal that followed, exhibit but the all-pervading and conquering wisdom of Buddha. Though *Yasodhara* continued to live in her Palace until, at a later period. when she was permitted, along with her mother-in-law, the junior Queen and foster-mother of Gautama, to join the order, Râhula, Gautama's son, was converted, and put to learn the preliminary tenets of the creed.

Many Sakhyans and Kolians joined the order, headed by some prominent personages, including *Ananda*, afterwards, the trusted friend and companion of Buddha; *Dêvadatta*, Gautama's brother-in-law, who subsequently became his rival and opponent; and *Upali*, the barber, who wrote the Vinaya Pitaka. *Anuradha*, another convert of this time, lived to become the reputed metaphysician of the creed.

Gautama then went to the *Kosalas*, and, after a short stay returned once more to *Rajagriha*. In the fourth year of his creed, he crossed the Ganges into *Vâisali.* He

was once more in *Kapilavastu*, when his old father *Suddhodana* died. The next important event on record, is the admission of *Gautami Dêvi* and *Yasodhara* and other Royal ladies into the order of Bikkunis, which was soon followed by the Queen of Bimbisara entering the order, in Magadha. The next important event of the conversion of the Brahmin *Bharadwaja* into the order happened to the great surprise of the people in the eleventh year of Buddhism.

When Râhula reached his eighteenth year, the Maharâhula was preached to him, and two years later, he was duly admitted into the order. Then Gautama went to *Kapilavasthu*, for the third time, after his Enlightenment, and addressed a discourse to his cousin, then the King of the Sakhyans.

In this manner, Gautama had been uniformly successful, during his long life, and in all his endeavours towards the spreading of his religion. From about his thirty-fifth year when he attained Buddhahood, till the very last moment of his death, at the advanced age of eighty, he was never without his work, always teaching, conversing or preaching to those that sought him, and to those whom Gautama himself sought, out of pure compassion.

His temperance of mind, an acquisition in the forest privations of his earlier trials.—which qualified him so admirably for the quiet contemplation under the tree,—his great concentrated application on the one subject before him ; his reputed aversion to luxuries, and indifference to caste pretensions ; his preferring a retired life, away from the family and other enticing entanglements ; and his firm belief that the cessation of man's restlessness can be brought about only by the cessation of man's existence, were some of the many virtues of Gautama which secured him an unprecedented success to his noble religion within his own life-time.

Above all, his pious, sincere and merciful personage was never seen by the bitterest of his opponents, without immediate and unconditional surrender to his superiority.

We should not pass over this portion without mentioning that Gautama, with all his noble virtues and great admirers, had, not only opponents of his religion, but also, great and powerful enemies, that even attempted to take his life. It is said that *Ajatasatru*, son of *Bimbisara* the Magadhan King, supported the cause of Brahminism and was joined, in his enmity to Buddha, by *Dêvadatta* (Gautama's wife's brother), at whose instance, he caused the death of his Royal father, who was a friend and patron of Gautama. When the wicked, yet unsuccessful, designs plotted against the life of Gautama failed, and when the wickedness of the perpetrators appeared in its dark colors, before *Ajatasathru*, he not only repented for his crimes, but also, is said to have embraced the faith of Buddha, while, *Dêvadatta*, who also perceiving his folly, sought forgiveness, had yet to die a wretched death, since his faults were too great. Gautama's father-in-law, *Suprabuddha*, the King of the Kolians, publicly abused Gautama for deserting *Yasodhara*, and adopted a course against Gautama, even as wicked as that of his son Dêvadatta, but he is also said to have been swallowed up by the earth in an equally sad manner.

Gautama's endeavours, during his lifetime, were chiefly confined to the Gangetic valley, being, in all the then known kingdoms of the Kosalas, the Sakhyas, the Kolias, the Vaggians and the Magadhans; though he went to the hilly districts of Nepal, he found the people rather rude, loose in manners, and cruel and not amenable to his mild ways, even as *Sankaracharya*, found the country, about fourteen centuries later.

His death, at the advanced age of eighty, is said to have been caused by partaking of pork, given in alms, by a smith *Chunda*, which produced diarrhœa. He bore his pains calmly and would not allow the good *Chunda* to be in any way molested. for his disease.

Even on the last night of his wordly stay, he is said, in spite of his great pains, to have patiently interviewed a Kusinagara Brahmin, and converted him to his creed, after a long discourse.

It is a peculiar coincidence that his birth, his enlightenment, and finally his death, have all happened *under the shade of a tree*, in the open, and under no roof. He was born under a tree in the groves of Lumbini; he became the enlightened Buddha under the reputed Bodhi tree; he died under a tree near the city of Kusinagara.

Main facts of Gautama Buddha's life, chronologically :—

Gautama's Birth	557 B. C.	Gautama's Father's Death, mother & wife joining the order	517 B. C.
Do. Marriage	538 ,,	Do. Son, Râhula joining the order ..	508 ,,
Do. Renunciation	528 ,,	Do. Father-in-law's death ...	507 ,,
Do. Enlightenment	522 ,,	Gautama's Death	477 ,,
Do. Revisiting Kapilavastu ...	521 ,,		

While in this manner, Buddha was establishing his new creed in the valley of the Ganges, the older Hinduism—neither the original pure and simple Vedic or Vedantic, nor the subsequent Brahminical,—was passing through a transition state, with a greater tendency towards the establishment of the prevailing Brahminic religion. Yet, the Brahminic one, with its hundreds of meaningless rituals and ceremonials, in spite of the supreme position claimed by its haughty propounders, the Brahmins, could not keep the nation under its entire control, as we have seen, when a simpler and a purer faith expounded by a very holy and virtuous personage, of no small origin or repute, presented its glaring and easy path to salvation, before them.

A system of self-culture and self restraint, unaided by priestly witchcraft, ensured the broader thinkers, the adaptability to advantage, of the new creed, which valued amongst others, the equality of men and women, irrespective of class or caste distinction.

For, equality was the underlying principle of Buddha's teachings, which, coupled with the pure love he enforced on all his disciples, endeared the new creed in preference, over and above the sectarian and unsympathetic Brahminism.

"Gautama not only expressed his pronounced disapprobation against the Hindu caste system and the ascetic practices sanctioned by Hinduism, he also exclaimed against the Vedic rites which were practiced according to the injunctions of the Brahmanas and the Sutras."

R. C. Dutt.

" For, caste was mischievous, asceticism harmful and misleading, and Vedic rites as then practised were silly, meaningless, dead forms, attended with needless cruelty to animals and loss of life "

The living of a pure and holy life unburdened by the self-mortifying penance and the performances of cumbersome ceremonials, tempted many a wavering dissenter of the older religion to embrace the simple new one.

Besides the numerous additions to his creed from the Kshatriya class and from the wandering Bikkus and ascetics, referred to already, Gautama, very successfully secured several Brahmins of repute to embrace his order, like the Kâsyapas and the Bhâradhwajas.

"For the first time, in the history of the world, it proclaimed a salvation which each man could gain for himself and by himself in the world, during this life, without any the least reference to God or Gods, either great or small."

It silenty and sternly points to the path of virtue and directs men to strive after a holy life. Herein Buddhism stands alone amongst others, for, how otherwise, could nearly half the nations of the world, be induced to take it up?

What numerical strength Buddhism gained during the life-time of Gautama, was not the only loss sustained by Brahminism. Besides the thousands that had, within the days of Buddha, embraced the religion, surely there were many more in a preparatory stage who all must have flocked one after another, after the new religion, in the subsequent period.

Thus impoverished, discouraged, and neglected, did Brahminism continue, during all the time when Buddhism was gloriously marching towards its zenith. The older religionists could do little to harm or retard the rapid growth of the newer one. For, the latter received royal support ever since its birth, which was not then accessible to the haughty Brahmins claiming an unprivileged superiority over the races. Further, the continuance of Kshatriyas as undisputed heads of Aryan Society, and the absence of an acknowledged monopoly of the Brahmins in religious thought, contributed to the strengthening of the new creed backed by Royalty, to the great detriment of the neglected Brahminism.

The want of unanimity even amongst the Brahmins, coupled with their exclusive claim to superiority, as the only mediators of God and man, not to speak of " the dismal obscurantism and thaumaturgic priestcraft infecting the whole religious thought of the people," caused the inevitable " parting of the ways " as exhibited by the rise and progress of the new creed from out of the disordered materials of the older one.

Amongst others, Kâsi, the first Aryan settlement, the stronghold of the people's creed, must have passed through an unusual experience when a new creed was prospering in its vicinity with such strides. It is possible many of its prominent citizens either embraced the new religion, or encouraged, directly or indirectly its destined progress. A natural fall in the importance of the existing religion in preference to the attractions of the newer one, must have minimised the sanctity of old Benares. It is even highly

probable that the traditional *Divodas*, who is represented to have usurped the throne that *Siva* vacated temporarily, was a Buddhist Prince, that for some time held sway over the ancient Benares. The attribution to him, in the *Kasi Khand*, of exceptional merits and the attempt yet, to expell him by various stratagems, assuredly in favour of *Siva*, only allegorically represents the once usurped supremacy of the Buddhists and their chief, even over the Hindu portion of Kâsi and the subsequent evacuation and restoration of Hinduism.

Excepting the singular instance mentioned above, we have yet no doubt to think that Kâsi was ever under Buddhistic Supremacy. The new Buddhistic and the ancient Hindu cities were co-existent, since the rise of the former, but we can never believe that the former ever tried to supercede the influence of the latter.

We cannot conceive that the orthodox brahmins of Kâsi adopted Buddhism as a whole or even allowed the continuance of Buddhistic Supremacy, if ever it was, in the most beloved of lands. The only probability was as elsewhere, the two religions existed, side by side, neither of them trying to interfere with the inner life of the other.

The subordination of Kâshi, as a dependency of the Kosalans or of the Magadhan empires, accounts for the want of details of history of this sacred city, even after the rise of Buddhism. In fact, the importance of Kâsî, as a religious centre was always the predominent feature and Benares rose to its present glory when Sri Sankaracharya re-established Hinduism, about fourteen centuries after the rise of Buddhism.

After the death of *Bimbisara*, the great friend and patron of Gautama, Buddhism did not feel the want of Royal prop, owing to the influential presence of Buddha, to whom all had such great regard that even *Ajatasatru* did not continue, subsequently at least, any open hostilities.

It was after Asoka, the grandson of Chandra Gupta Maurya, the great builder of the Magadhan empire, was crowned in 269 B.C., and not until this great sovereign embraced Buddhism, highly vexed at the horrors of war, as he was, after his successful campaign over the Kalingas in 261 B C., did Buddhism get a Royal support of an extraordinary character; Asoka not only encouraged the rapid stride with which Buddhism strode in his country, but also introduced it into Ceylon, which island in its turn sent it across to Burma, Siam, China and Japan. It is also said that missionaries were sent to Greece, Tibet, Kandahar and other foreign states. Thus, the new creed spread not by force of arms or otherwise, but by an indegenous natural flow, perhaps freer than the open and sympathetic heart of the great Buddha. Great monuments were erected in prominent cities to proclaim its glory, while most in-offensive yet influential bodies of missionaries backed by royalty, were daily adding to the number of their master's followers. The quarter century of the latter part of Asoka's reign, during which period, this powerful sovereign served the cause of Buddha, were the golden days when Buddhism perhaps shone in all its youthful splendour. We cannot say that it ever attained its bold manhood, in the land of its birth, for, with the reign of Asoka ended the powerful Magadhan kingdom, whose later kings never more becoming prominent. It must have been yet of an appreciable character, if not very power-

ful when *Kanishka*, the great Kushan chief established himself at the head of a considerable kingdom in the north-west. He tried to imitate Asoka in many respects, and amongst others, in offering an encouraging hand to Buddhism, in its new garb; another quarter century (125-150 A. D.) in the epoch of Neo-Buddhism, under the royal patronage of this renowned sovereign might have facilitated the continuance of Buddha's creed in the country. What were the further developments of the religion in the period subsequent to the fall of this dynasty about the end of the second century after Christ, or during the rise and fall of the famous Guptas (320—480 A.D.) or in the intervening ages following, till the rise of Harsha in 606 A.D., we cannot determine with certainty.

This younger son of the King of Thanêswar, after establishing himself as the undisputed master of Northern India, in the short period of six years, since he assumed power, began to accept several religions at the same time, amongst which Buddhism was perhaps the more prominent one. For a second time, after Asoka, Buddhism found an interested and powerful monarch in Harsha, though his sincerity to the religion he so much upheld, cannot be compared with that of Asoka.

Hiouen Thsaing, who visited India, during this Emperor's reign was well received and protected during his long travels in India. A grand salvation assembly held at Prayag, under the auspices of Harshachandra and his distinguished vassals from the Arabian Sea to the Bay of Bengal and from the Himalayas to the Vindhyas was witnessed by Hiouen Thsaing, when "the rich accumulations of five years," excepting horses, elephants and military accoutrements, were distributed to the holy men of all sects—Buddhists, Jains and Brahmins. This illustrious Chinese visitor saw, in spite of all the splendour exhibited, symptoms of the decline of the religion, for the study of whose various stages, since its birth, he travelled.

Thus we see that from at least the middle of the seventh century after Christ, Buddhism, showed not only signs of internal weekness. but also failed to find powerful and staunch upholders.

It is true that the Royal patronage of Asoka and his remarkable missionary zeal gave immense impetus to the propagation of the creed, but the tolerant or indifferent policy adopted by Asoka, Kanishka, and Harsha, towards its sister creeds had always permitted the latter creeds to continue undisturbed through all the ages.

The older creeds Brahminism and Jainism had always flourished, side by side, with the younger Buddhism, and, as we observe elsewhere, Brahminism never lost its old prestige, especially in Benares the stronghold of Hinduism.

Further, the fact that not one of the great monarchs of India, ever had a real control over Southern India, strengthens our supposition that Buddhism had never flourished in the country below the Vindhyas and the Nurbuddha.

How could there be a Buddhistic period then in the Early History of India? Is it a misnomer, or is it a misunderstanding of the facts? We are of opinion that there was no such thing, in the early Indian History, as a Buddhistic period, though, of course, this noble creed, born in India, was allowed to grow even into cheerful youth-

hood—nurtured and tended by royalties—only to disappear when such attention was no more available.

Buddhism gradually disappeared from the land of its origin, not because of oppression or persecution, but for want of upholders, and people cared for it no longer. Further, the high ideals of Buddha's eightfold path were gradually lost in the current of popular superstitions, but nevertheless they "purified the muddy waters of priestcraft and cleared away many obstructions to the progress of true religion." Buddha became absorbed in the Hindu Pantheon, as one of the incarnations of Vishnu, the Preserver, but when about the eighth century, Brahminism succeeded in re-establishing its authority, the whole of its spiritual teaching was permeated with the doctrines of a purer and nobler faith."

"Benares again became the centre of religious activity in Northern India with the appearance of the Great Hindu Reformer Sri Sankarâchârya".

"Sankarâchârya waged relentless war against the superstitions of the Buddhists of his time, and against the loathsome practices of some of the Hindu sects: but convinced of the futility of attempting to supercede entirely the ancient forms of popular worship by the high philosophic doctrines of the intellectual Brahmins, he effected a compromise."

Sankarâchârya's preaching marks the final absorbtion of Buddhism into the Brahminical system.

"The Buddhistic Monasteries continued to exist at Saranath and elsewhere in India, until they were finally destroyed by the Mohamadan invaders, of the 12th century; but in the eigth century, Buddhism, as a seperate religion, was already discredited, and the Brahmins were re-instated in their position as the spiritual leaders of the people" which position they still hold, though disturbed in the meanwhile, starting with the advent of the Afghan invaders about 1194 A.D. and the subsequent Moghal devastations towards the middle of the 17th century A.D.



CHAPTER IV.

MEDIEVAL HISTORY—THE AFGHANS AND THE MOGHULS.

We have seen the Kâshis, as a dependant kingdom, under the suzerainty first of the Kosalans and then of the Magadhans and subsequent history points out its dependancy under the kings of Kanouj, whose supremacy over the greater portion of the Gangetic Valley, along the many provinces of the original Magadhan Empire was established on the ruins of the latter. In a similar manner, Kâshi had always continued as a subject kingdom under whomsover the adjoing provinces established supremacy. *Jai Chand*, who opposed the first Mahamadan invasion, belonged to the family of the Gaharwars whose previous kings seem to have ruled over Benares for a series of years. Tradition asserts that *Banar*, after whom the city is supposed, by some, to have taken its name, was the last of the Kâshi kings of the Gaharwar family, that is generally believed to be the reputed builder of the Raj Ghat fort, at the confluence of the Barna with the Ganges.

During the period, starting from that of the supremacy of the kings of Kanouj, over the valley of the Ganges, all through the Rajput and Mohamadan occupations, this alluvial valley seems to have been permanently owned by several aboriginal tribes, like the Soirs, Bhars. &c.

When, following the first Afghan invasions, the various Rajput clans, who were evidently dispossesssed thereby, of their endeared possessions, descended in a south-easterly direction, in search of new lands, they found it, as already observed, under the ownership of the rude yet powerful aboriginies. Though they were not able to entirely sweep the previous occupants out of the valley, yet the fugitive Rajputs succeeded in establishing themselves in their midst, into various petty camps, or villages. Some of them, yet, by sheer exertion and exercise of uncommon strength and authority, settled themselves, by degrees, into somewhat powerful petty states, under various names. Amongst others, we may mention as the most prominent clan, the *Raghuvamsis*, whose reputed chiefs have held a more or less powerful and independant sway, over the surrounding tracts. It is said that one Rajput *Deo Kunwar* (Dêva Kumâr) of the clan, that came from Ayodhya, married a daughter of King *Banar*, of Banares, obtaining a taluq in his kingdom as her *Sree Dhan*. *Dumaon Deo*, ninth in descent from *Deo Kunwar*, and a contemporary of *Sikhandar Lodi*, has left a very powerful remembrance in the province as a great chief, and as the famous builder of the stronghold at Chandrauti.

We may also mention, in passing, that other Rajput clans of secondary importance were those of the Brigbhansis, the Surajbhansis, the Nagbhansis, etc., who all, have, at one time or other, held important positions in the province.

Now turning to survey the influence that Mohamadan colonists of the same period had in the neighbourhood of Benares, we find very little of importance to note. Mohamad of Ghazni, is said to have advanced on Benares on two occasions, in 1019, and 1022 A.D., and it was on the latter occasion that king *Banar* is said to have been overpowered and slain by Mohamed. Ahmad Nialtagin raided Benares and carried away valuable treasures, when he invaded the province three years after the death of Mohamed.

It is generally understood that Benares had remained under Mohamadan rule since the conquest of Mohamad over the traditional king *Banar*, though the more probable date must be from the advent of Kutb-ud-din Aibak in 1194, for whose decided victory over a Jaichand of Benares, we have stronger and undisputed proofs To Kutb-ud-din is attributed the first destruction of Benares, including thousands of sanctified temples and the plundering of all the superficial treasures of this ancient and religious strong hold of Hindustan. The novelty of the foreign pollution, in the acutely sensitive manner in which it was done, and the practical levelling to ground of the magnifcent old city, must have driven several staunch and pure Hindus, into adjoining wilderness and into the unapproachable plains of Dekkan below the Vindhyas, leaving their beloved and sacred city to fade into insignificance.

After a short interval during which black period, we have little or no authentic facts to mention, Benares appears to have been, at least, till Jaunpur was preferred by the later Pathan rulers of Delhi, the seat of a province over which Jalal-ud-din ruled as the deputy of Gias-ud-din.

During the period following, Benares seems to have lost its political importance as well, for the first time in its history The kingdom of Jaunpur founded by the Khwaja-i-jalam in 1394, continued only for a short period, ending in 1474; and Benares had evidently continued under his Viceroyalty, and that of his successors, with separate Governors over it, as verified by Ghulam Amina, the last of such, in the Amina Mandavi. When in 1494, Sikandar Lodi finally subdued the last of Jaunpur Sultans, Benares once more attained an importance which was refused to her since 1394. The famous Dumaon Deo referred to already, as comtemporary of Sikandar Lodi, now got the rent free tenure of Katehir, for his faithful allegiance to the ruler.

We now pass on to the Moghal period. when Benares played some important part, as now in the hands of the Moghal Governor and then into those of the Afghans. Internal insurrection, besides, amongst the Hindus themselves, which started from about the Lodi supremacy in 1494, rendered Benares a place of frequent confusion and strifes. In fact Benares had been a bone of contention, between the supreme Government at Delhi, and the dependant Viceroyalties of Jounpar, Bihar, or Bengal, even as it was between the Kosalas and the Magadhas.

The fall of Ibrahim Lodi at Paniput in 1526, the appearance of Daria Khan in possession of the Eastern Provinces of the central power, Humayun's successful campaign against Daria Khan, the subsequent re-conquest of the Afghans, and, Baber's final subjugation of the provinces as far as Bihar, and the Governorship of Benares under

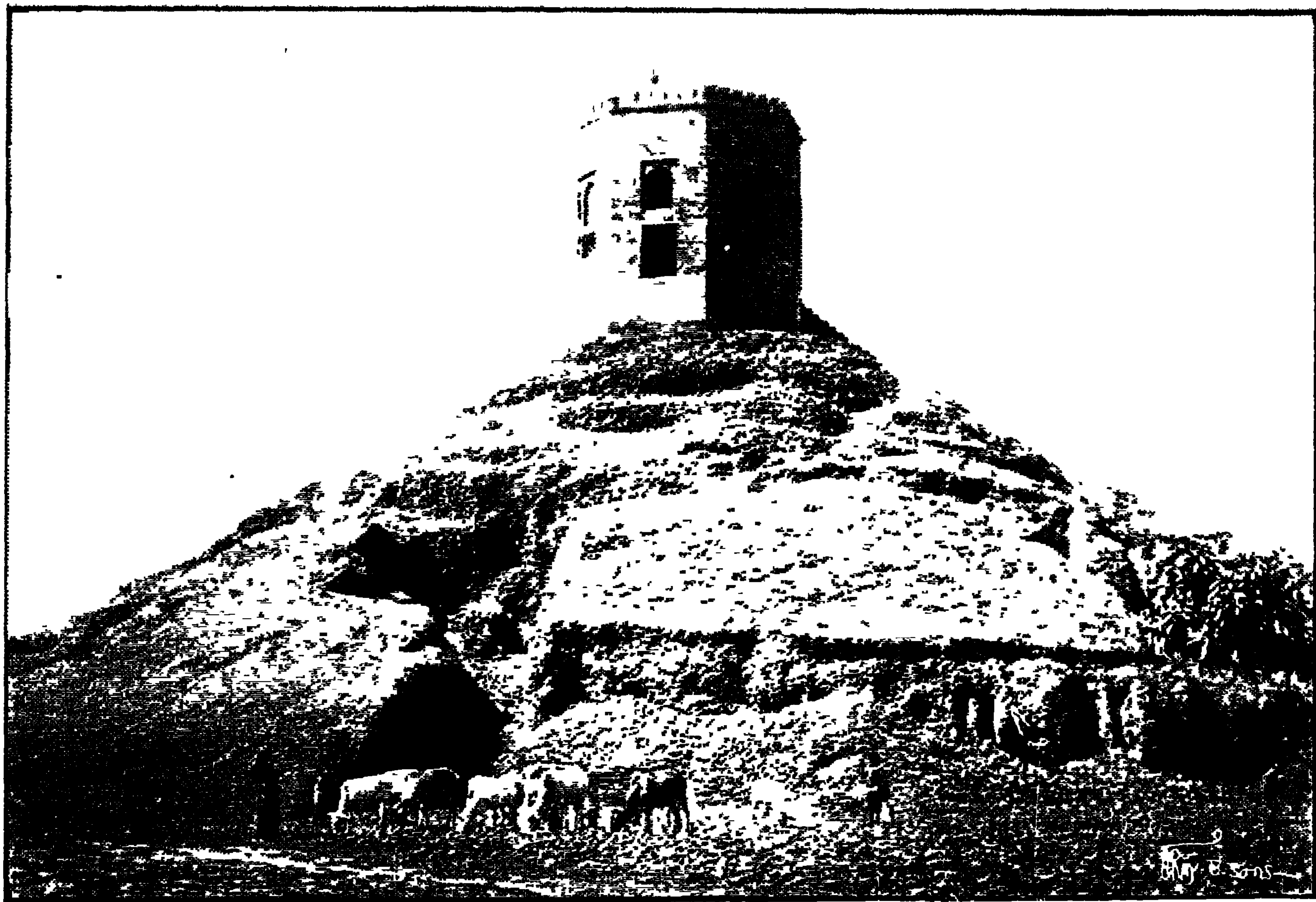
Abdul Ali Khan, were events that immediately preceded the death of Baber. Humayun his son and successor had to contend against not only the son and successor of Daria Khan, the Sultan but also against the shrewd Sher Khan. The battle of Lucknow in 1530, secured to Humayun the surrender of Sher Khan in addition, though only temporarily; for Humayun had to continue his campaign against him into Gaur and other places in Bengal. Sher Khan was however successful in Benares subsequent to the departure of Humayun, and he massacred many Moghals including the Governor Mir Fazali. He was soon master of all provinces as far as Kanouj where Humayun was defeated in a pitched battle which established Sher Khan as the supreme Lord of Hindustan. Benares was now in the hands of Sher Khan and then passed on to those of his successor Islam Shah who held it till his death.

After a second interval of confusion following the death of Islam Shah, during which period Adil Shah may be said to have had a sort of control over the district, the visit to Benares by Akbar himself in 1565 and the plunder of the town by his soldiery as a punishment for its hand in the late insurrection and his subsequent appointment of Munim Khan to govern the district are important events in the history of Benares. The next sccessful campaign of Akbar against the Nawab of Bengal and the appointment of Munim Khan as the Viceroy of Bengal, transferred the district of Benares into the direct control of the Emperor with seperate appointed Governors for its immediate charge.

When in 1584, the Allahabad fort was built and the capital of the province was shifted thereto, from Jaunpur, Benares was treated as a seperate *Sarkar* in the *subah* of Allahabad, and Mirza Chin Quiliz, son of Quiliz Khan Andazani (a previous governor of Benares) governed Benares, for many years. Akbar's tolerance enabled Benares to regain its lost prestige and to restore many sacred sanctuaries to their original purity. The Hindu Princes vied, one with the other, in beautifying their sacred city with many temples, palatial structures, Ghats, etc. One of them, Raja Man Singh of Amber, built the famous Man Mandil, which, with the subsequent addition of an observatory, has still retained its ancient glory, and is hence a frequent resort of tourists and pilgrims.

The next important mention in conection with the history of Benares was the refuge taken by Prince Khurrum, afterwards Shah Jahan the Emperor, before the Imperial troops in Allahabad, within its precincts, ere his departure into the Dekkan in 1624. Shah Jahan when Emperor, unlike Akbar, his good grand-father, ordered the immediate destruction of all temples under construction, and it is believed, not less than seventy six temples under construction were razed to the ground in Benares alone. During the subsequent reigns too, Benares was the chosen victim of the successive Emperor's freaks, besides being the scene of frequent destruction and a place of resort and refuge for the Royal insurgents. It has been a fact that, for what clear reasons we cannot say, all the Royal insurgents, sons of Emperors, generally, have chosen to retire on Benares. The example of Prince Khurrum, afterwards Shah Jahan, and that of Dara Shikoh, may be mentioned as the more prominent ones. Besides, the earlier Moghals had all of them been to Benares ; Baber, went there in person to appoint its Governor ;

Humayun, sent his negotiary envoys to Sher Khan from Benares, where he stayed for some days. His name is still remembered in connection with the *Humayun's Tower*, being of an octagonal brick tower erected by the Emperor Akbar in 1588 A.D., to commemorate a visit of his father Humayun to the spot. It is erected over the ruins of a huge Buddhist Stupa, which *Hiouen Thsaing* found to be over 400 feet. An Arabic inscription on a stone slab over its Gateway, reads " As Humayun, King of the seven climes, now residing in paradise, designed to come and sit here one day, thereby increasing the splendour of the sun, so Akbar, his son and humble servant, resolved to build on this spot a lofty tower reaching the blue sky. It was in the year 996 A. H that this beautiful building was erected." Akbar was in Benares to punish its citizens for their

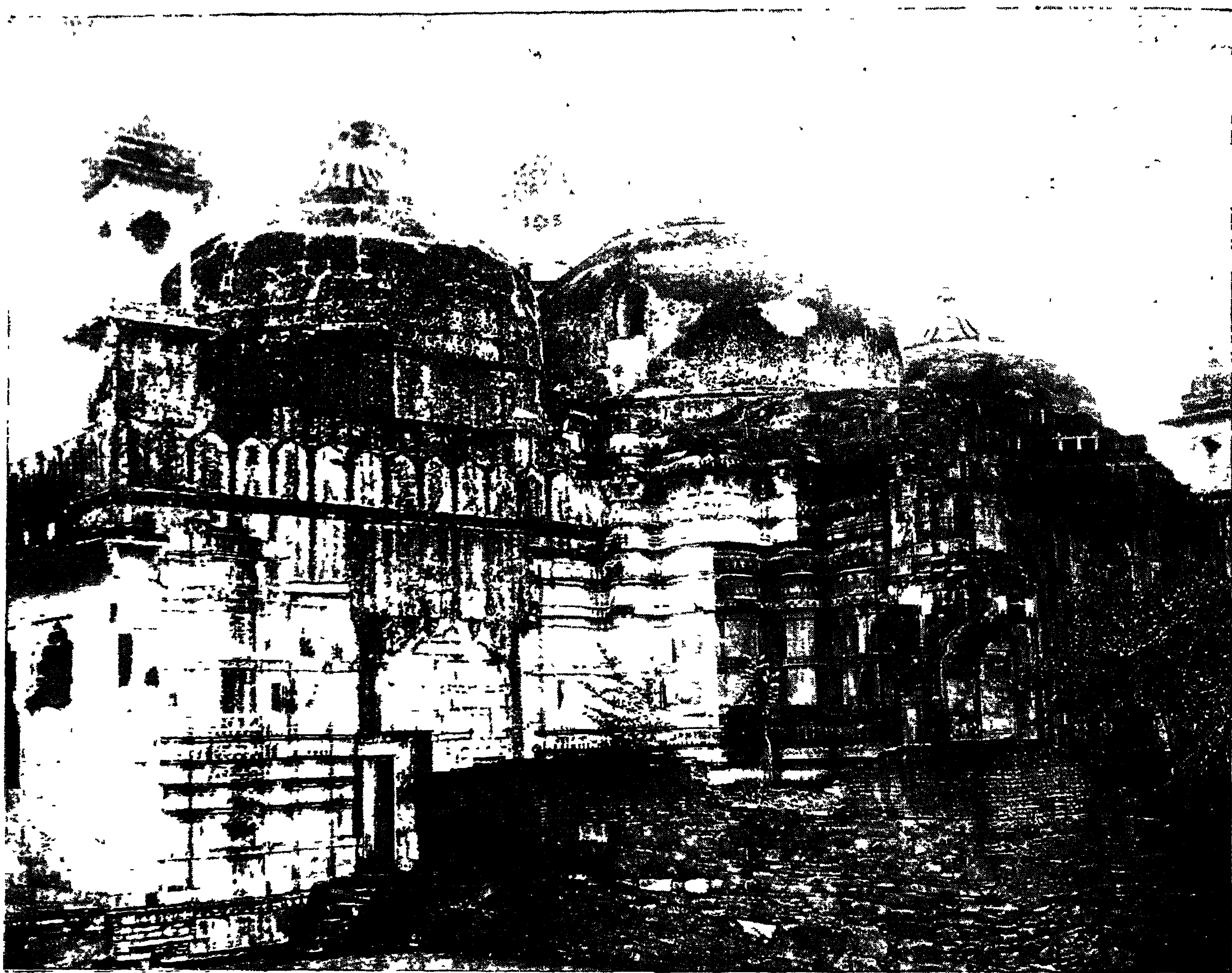


HUMAYUN'S TOWER-SARANATH. K. S. M. & CO.

hand in the rebellion along with Khan Zaman. Ere proceeding on his successful Bengal Campaign, Akbar stayed in Benares for three days on his way to Patna.

Benares was twice attacked by Shuja of Bengal, failing in his first attempt in 1657, when Raja Jai Singh gave him a decisive battle and drove him into his own provinces. On the latter occasion, when Dara Shikoh was overthrown by Aurangazeb near Agra, he was able to occupy Benares ejecting Ram Dass, its commandant of the fort, and levied a large sum of money on its rich citizens. But the success of Shuja was soon reverted by Aurangazeb, who now ruled the Empire in place of his deposed father.

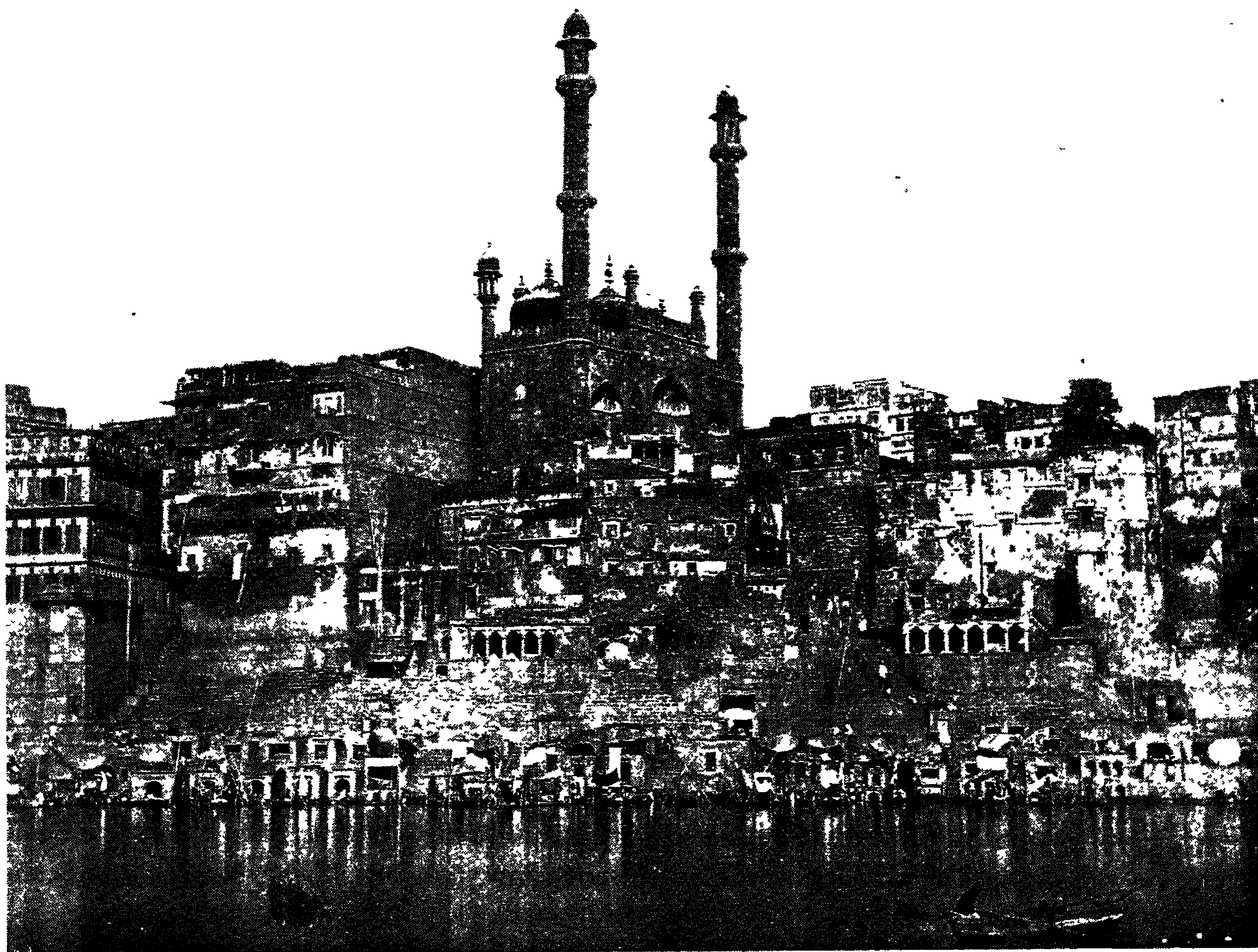
Benares is afterwards remembered in connection with the flight of the famous *Sivaji* in 1666, from the court of the Emperor at Agra. As if to revenge on Benares, which sheltered *Sivaji* and Dara Shikoh, Aurangazeb visited Benares, after three years,



THE RUINS OF OLD BISWESWAR TEMPLE—AURANGAZEB'S MOSQUE. K. S. M. & CO.

destroyed the famous and ancient temple of Biswêswar, raising in its ruins a stupendous mosque; levelled to the ground another equally important Vishnu temple called Benu Mâdhav and erected the huge mosque with towering minarets, on the river bank. Hundreds of other temples were then demolished and mosques built with their materials or over their ruins. In his so-called religious zeal, he ruled, that Benares was thenceforth to be called Mohamadabad, which name unfortunately did not long survive its illustrious inventor, as observed already in the first chapter.

During the period immediately following the death of Aurangazeb, Benares seems to have been held by the Imperial officers up to 1719, when the province along with those of Jaunpur, and Ghazipur, were given to a courtier Murtaza Khan, who surrendered same to Sadat-Ali-Khan, the first Nawab Vazir of Oudh, for an annual payment of seven lakhs of rupees. But the province was again leased out for eight lakhs of rupees by the Nawab to his friend Mir Rustam Ali, who retained the districts till he incurred the displeasure of his friend and master in 1738.



AURANGAZEB'S MOSQUE—BENI MADHAV. K. S. M. & CO.

In the Government of the provinces, Benares, Jaunpur, Gazeepur and Chunar, Mir Rustam Ali, the sub-lessee from the Nawab, depended entirely on his deputies, chief amongst whom was Mansa Ram, a reputed Gautama Bhûmihâr Brahmin, Zamindar of Thuthuria in pargana Kaswar (now Gangapur). Mansa Ram, though only a deputy, must yet be styled the actual ruler of the province, considering the unquestionable influence and authority he exercised over Mir Rustum Ali and over the ryots and Zamin dars of the province.

We have now arrived at a period, though still under the Moghul Suzerainty of Delhi, when, the ancestors of the present Raj-family of Benares, were establishing themselves in the mastership of the provinces of Jaunpur, Chunar, Ghazeepur, and Banares proper. We cannot say, from the available facts, that Mansa Ram Singh, the illustrious founder of the present Raj Family, was either an upstart or an usurper, as some have attempted to misrepresent. For, he was himself a reputed zamindar of *Thuthuria* in *Kaswar*, subsequently Gangapur of repute; he held high offices besides, under Mir

Rustum Ali, the then Lessee Governor of the province; he had been recommended by Mir Rustum Ali himself, through Murtaza Khan,for the high rank and position of Rajah Bahadur, which honoured title was, at the request of Mansa Ram, given to his son Balwant Singh, by the Emperor at Delhi; he had been, in fact, the actual ruler of the province, owing to the indifference, indolence and incapability of his purely titular master; and, he, actually succeeded in finally getting his ability and authority over the province, acknowledged and sanctioned by the supreme authority, when he had a chance, of course, in the interests of the people whose welfare concerned him the most.

It will be but opportune, therefore, to give, ere proceeding further, a contiguous and descriptive history of the Kings of Banares, from the early days of Mansa Ram, the founder, to that of the present glorious representative of this ancient family, who, one and all, had always maintained a perfectly loyal attitude towards the central ruling power, as will be established hereafter.

THE HISTORY OF THE KINGS OF BENARES.

The Present Royal Family.

A tradition asserts that, in the early days of the twelfth century A.D., when King Banar was the reputed ruler of Benares, there lived in a village called Thuthuria (now Gangapur), about six miles from Benares, a pious Brahmin—a Siddha—named *Krishna Misra*, of the renowned Gautama Gothra. He was universally respected in the neighbourhood for his disinterested devotions to a pure life and complete aversion to all things worldly, and, he was also the King's Mantra Guru. The Rajah expressed to his Guru, on various occasions his desire to present him with something valuable, but, the sage would not have any gift. The Raja, yet, contrived one day to have a gift deed for a village tied to his turban, without his knowledge. On the sage's return to his house, he was perplexed at the sudden disappearance of his wonted saintly calmness, and found, instead, his once very holy personage was now redolent with worldly odour When, on close examinatiou of his clothes, he found out what the king had done, in a fit of rage, he is said to have exclaimed that even as the Rajah had cunningly entangled him again into worldly affairs against his desire, so will the Rajah's dominions also pass on to his sons and heirs, in course of time.

We are all aware of the sequel that followed immediately afterwards, in the natural course of events, when Rajah Banar fell before the advancing Mohamadan Army. The sons of *Krishna Misra* or *Kuthu Misser*, as he was popularly known, conscious of their lucky chances, as predicted by the old father, engaged themselves under the ruling Mohamadans and were daily rising in their favour. During the years following this incident, till the death of Aurangazeb, when the Mohamadan power was decidedly supreme in the country, the descendants of *Krishna Misra* might have patiently toiled along, faithfully attached to the ruling centre, honored now and then with Zaghirs or Zamindaries, but nothing more definite is known of them. When, after the death of Aurangazeb, a general confusion arose in the Kingdom, and every petty Zamindar

rose in rebellion refusing to pay the Royal revenue, and when Mohamad Shah, the then Emperor at Delhi, saw himself hard pressed by the Maharattas on all sides, he decided to put a stop to all this by appointing native chiefs in charge of some prominent ancient provinces. Accordingly, he, in the year 1730 A D., determined the re-constitution, amongst others, of the ancient Kingdom of Kâshi, under one Mansa Ram, who was then in possession of a more or less clear authority over the vast Gangetic province, himself being the head of an ancient and powerful clan of Trikarma Bhûmihar Brahmins.

He was duly constituted as a Rajah by the Emperor himself and an Imperial Sunnud was granted him for the sovereignty of the four sircars Jaunpur, Chunar, Gazipur and Benares proper, on an annual tribute of thirteen lakhs of rupees to the Imperial Treasury at Delhi. Thus Raja Mansaram became the only and legitimate ruler of the province.

Though we believe that Mansa Ram was given the sovereignty of the four sircars mentioned already, by the Emperor personally, there is yet another version which establishes that Mansa Ram rose to power and title of Raja Bahadur as a deputy of MirRustum Ali, the sub-lessee Governor of the said province, under Nawab Murtaza Khan, to whom the said Jaghir was orignally given by the Emperor. Even supposing the latter story to be true, from the fact,that Mir Rustum Ali recommended Mansa Ram, his trusted Deputy and actual ruler of the province, through Murtaza Khan, to the honored title of Raja Bahadur,evidently proves the high position and authority that Mansaram then held over the said province. The latter version also says,that as desired by Mansa Ram such title of Raja Bahadur was secured to his son Balwant Singh, for whom Mir Rustam Ali had a greater love and esteem than for his father. So Mansa Ram and his son Raja Bahadur Balwant Singh managed the affairs of the state as they thought best. For practical understanding, Mir Rustam Ali,sub-lessee Governor under Nawab Vizir of Oudh or of Murtaza Khan, only acted more or less, as the Imperial Suzawal, for the regular payment of the Royal tribute. We learn from all available records, that the actual and immediate control and exercise of authority over the ryots and Zamindars of the four sircars, were in the hands of Mansa Ram and his son Balwant Singh.

It may not be out of place to detail a few important incidents that happened during their reign, as displaying the politic manner in which the subjugation of the province owned by several powerful Zamindars was secured. Ere proceeding to deal with the said Zamindars of the province as to how they were either brought to friendly terms or subjugated, let us give a short sketch of Mansa Ram's family members for the active parts they have taken in his Government.

Mansa Ram's father Manôranjan Singh, unlike the general tendency of the other members and friends of the family, was greatly addicted to the agriculture of his lands, as he was the Zamindar of half the village of modern Gangapur.

Mansa Ram had three younger brothers, named Dasaram, Mayaram and Dayaram, who were all on friendly terms with the eldest and even co-perated in his Government.

Dasaram was appointed by Mansa Ram as governor of Kuttehue and Sheopur, subsequently expelled by Balwant Singh on suspected misconduct, and ultimately restored, though he died in an incursion, afterwards, with the Raghubansis near Chandrauti, leaving three sons, the eldest of whom Jyejeet Singh had one son Jagat Singh, who after the flight of Chait Singh, submitted to the English Company, and paid his revenue to them, remaining in attendance on the resident at Benares. He was also an accomplice with Wazir Ali in his plot.

Mayaram had one son Surnam Singh, a high spirited young man, that was zealous of Raja Balwant Singh's prosperity and being pursued by the latter's forces, for his attempt to kill him, fled into Bengal, where he stayed a while; but finally returned, and settled near Gazeepur, and sent his two sons Dhrigbijayee Singh and Jagadev Singh to Balwant Sing, and they were well treated with Jagirs allotted in their favour. They lived a good life, though the elder one died in Chet Singh's time, leaving one son Roop Singh, while Juggadev Singh lived to become Naib under Raja Oodit Narayan Singh.

Dayaram, the youngest brother of Mansa Ram, had one son Mirbhan Singh, who died in Chet Singh's time, leaving five sons, the eldest of whom, Maniar Singh, was taken under the special care of Balwant Singh,and was educated and brought up as if he were his own son. He lived to the end of Chet Singh's time, and died of grief and vexation at Lateefpur after the latter's flight thither, leaving three sons.

Amongst the prominent Zamindars whose subjugation marks a rise in the scale of Mansa Ram's influence and authority in his province, may be mentioned, those of Zakkini, Majhowa, and Mureahoo.

Futteh Singh of Zakkini, Berisal Singh. and Dureaoo Singh (two brothers) of Majhowa, and Bikramjeet of Mureaoo, were, in the Court of Mir Rustam Ali, held in great esteem, and they all held high offices, ere the entry of Mansa Ram, as a deputy. When, following the rise into Rustum Ali's favour, of Mansa Ram, the above mentioned Zamindars, grew zealous, they found the only alternative lay in their satisfying their grudge against Mansa Ram by open hostility. They left service under Mir Rustam Ali and retiring into their own Zamindaries, started hostile operations against Mansa Ram, not caring for his authority. But, Futteh Singh, the wiser of the lot, and also a worthy descendant of the famous Kristna Misra, in spite of his zealousy at the sudden rise of Mansa Ram, decided to court the friendship of the latter which he was able to secure through Shaik Kabul Mohamad. Mansa Ram too remained true to his friend Futteh Singh in upholding his cause and fighting for him with the other irreconcilable Zamindars of Majhowa, when they raided on the valued possessions of the former for his allegiance with himself.

In the fight that ensued, the chiefs of Majhowa were successful in the beginning, though, very soon after the timely arrival of Rustum Ali for Mansa Ram's help, it was reverted, and ended in the death, of the two brothers and flight of Beni Singh and Shive Bux Singh, their sons, towards Bettiah, to Nawab Ally Koolly Khan of Allahabad. In the latter's hostile operations against Balwant Singh, Shive Bux died and Beni returned home and died afterwards leaving a son Pahlwan Singh who, subsequently

entered into matrimonial connections with Ajaib Singh, when he was the Naib. The province of Majhowa was given back to his son-in-law Goordut Singh, son of Pahlwan Singh, but when the rent could not be paid regularly, and after the marriage of Pahlwan's grand-daughter with Rajah Oodit Narayan Singh, the zamindary was finally handed over to the officials of the Rajah.

Mansa Ram had a grudge against Bikramajeet of Mareeahoo. for the latter's great indifference to him, owing to his old friendship with Rustum Ali When the Nawab Vazir of Oudh ordered Mir Rustum Ali to punish the zamindars of Chowrasi, with the army that was then led by Mir Rustum Ali, those of Bikramajit and Mansaram also followed. Mansaram, with a view to attain his end against Bikramajeet, induced the Chowrasi Zamindars, who were not prepared for battle, to hold on firmly, promising his own allegiance to them ; and then represented to Mir Rustum Ali that his son Balwant Singh, who had taken a fancy to the fort of Mareeahoo, would retire from the field with his large army, if he were not given possession of the said fort, and that they cannot fight the battle sucessfully without him.

On this, Rustum Ali, had no other alternative but to induce his old friend Bikramajeet to surrender the fort on his own written promise of returning it at the close of the fight with the Chowrasi chiefs. When, Bikramajeet sent his men, yielding to the wishes of Rustum Ali, to deliver the fort to Mansa Ram's trusted men, it was well fortified by the latter, and was never, in fact, restored to Bikramajeet, though he tried his best to get it back; for, Rustam Ali was, at the time, entirely in the hands of Mansa Ram and dared not displease either Mansa Ram or Balwant Singh. Thus, without a blow on either side, Mansa Ram obtained possession of the strong fortress of Mareeahoo and the subjugation of Bikramajeet.

The next event in the days of Mansa Ram was a very memorable one as it finally established him as the undisputed master of the four Sircars of Jaunpur, Gazeepur Benares and Chunar.

Mir Rustam Ali, who held office direct from the Vazir as Governor of the province, over which Mansa Ram and Balwant Singh exercised such sway as we have seen already, had many enemies, who one and all, poisoned the favourably inclined mind of the Nawab Vazir, against him. But, owing to the great intimacy between the two, nothing detrimental to Rustum Ali happened till the Nawab Vazir was called by the Emperor at Delhi and Sufdur Jung, his son-in-law became the Nawab Vazir of Oudh. The enemies of Mir Rustum Ali had a ready hearer of their complaints in the person of the new Nawab, who forthwith proceeded to Jaunpur, to enquire into the matter, and to punish, and even expel Rustum of his authority over the province.

Rustum Ali was in a fix now. and did not know exactly what to decide, expecially, when, now, the enemies of Mansa Ram and Balwant Singh, secretly represented to Rustum Ali, that all that confusion was caused by the wily Mansa Ram and Balwant Singh. They represented to Rustum Ali that, in spite of all the external friendly show, the father and son were secretly plotting to ruin Rustum.

On this when Mansaram was questioned, he utilised the excellent opportunity to make wavering Rustam Ali, firm in his confidants, and assured him of his continuing fidelity and that of his son Balwant Singh. He even explained to him that, if he would be entrusted with the duty of representing Rustam Ali, before the angry Sufdar Jung, he would settle everything satisfactorily. Accordingly, Mansa Ram went to Jaunpur with valuable treasures and presents from Rustum Ali, and almost succeeded in turning the mind of the Nawab to look favourably towards Rustam Ali, though had to promise an additional tribute of four lakhs At this stage, unfortunately, a letter came from Booran-ul-Mulk to Sufdar jung, asking him to give away the province of Gazeepur to Shikh Abdoolah, a courtier; and so it was decided to give Gazeepur to Abdoollah and the remaining three provinces to Rustum. But Mansa Ram did not like this and during the hot discussions between him and the Nawab's officers, Shaik Abdoollah suddenly appeared and offerred an addition of eight lakhs, were the four provinces given him.

During this interval, the enemies of Mansa Ram were freely admitted into Rustam's Court, in preference to Balwant Singh, who was, an eye-witness to all that passed; and the result was that, Rustum Ali, instigated by such men, at once suspected Mansa Ram, and sent a seperate envoy to the Nawab, with instructions to negotiate directly through the Nawab's officers without caring for Mansa Ram

When Mansa Ram heard of all this, it grieved him much, and his friends in the Nawab's camp. advised him to act for himself under the circumstances, and since his master had so disgraced and ruined him, being under the bad influence of some of his own enemies. Further, Mansa Ram was quick enough to find out that all his influence and authority in the country would disappear, were the plans of Rustum, instigated by his enemies, to succeed. The horrors of an impending insignificance, were he to fail, induced Mansa Ram, to make overtures to the Nawab's officers' and eventually secured him in the mastery of the three sircars only of Benares, Jaunpur and Chunar on an annual tribute to the Royal treasury of thirteen lakhs of rupees. Accordingly Mansa Ram obtained a sunnad from the Nawab for the three provinces, with the exception of the Kotwallee of Benares, the governorship of the fort of Jaunpur, and the Benares mint. He was duly installed with the aid of the Nawab's troops. In the same manner, the province of Ghazeepur was given to Shaik Abdoollah, on an annual revenue of three lakhs of rupees.

When the news reached Mir Rustum Ali, he forthwith left Benares, and flew towards Allahabad, overcome with grief, being unable to help himself otherwise. Though the position of Mir Rustum Ali, at this stage, is to be sympathised with, yet, Mansa Ram, as we have seen, had been clearly above suspicion, and in fact, was forced to act in the manner in which he did act, to save his own prestige and position, a ruin of which was planned by Rustum Ali, under ill advice.

Mansa Ram forthwith engaged himself and his son Balwant Singh, in the government of his three Sircars, but his continued exertion and great application to duties so told on his health that he was finally laid in ever-lasting and peaceful bed, about the year 1738.

Raja Balwant Singh, the only son of Mansa Ram thus inherited the valued acquisitions of his honored father, in the government of Chunar, Jaunpur and Benares proper; and he held it under the Imperial sunnad by a direct application with nuzzar besides, to the Emperor at Delhi. It must be here mentioned, that the succession of Raja Balwant Singh to his father's kingdom was two years previous to the death of Sadat-ali-Khan, which event happened in 1740, or, Sufdur Jung, his nephew, succeeded to the Subhhadhary of Oudh "two years after the installation, under the Emperor's firman and Sunnud of Rajah Balwant Singh."

This fact confirms our supposition that the Benares Raj family owed the supremacy in their province, to Mohamad Shah, the Emperor, and not to the Subhadhars of Oudh, though Benares had been alloted, since the time of Aurangazeb, within the latter's viceroyalty.

Raja Balwant Singh, having thus secured himself firmly in his province by Imperial Sunnad, ordered the erection, in Thuthuria, his ancestral village, a strong-hold and a palace within, for his own residence, changing its name to Gangapur. During one of his supervising visits at the Gangapur fort, under construction, Balwant singh is said to have picked up, from amongst the labourers, a young lad of his own Bhûmihâr caste, who afterwards grew, under his care, to be his trusted and influential Ousan Singh.

During the first ten years of his reign, when Mohamad Shah was the Emperor, Raja Balwant Singh discharged his duties of a vassal, correctly, and punctually remitting the royal revenue, as it fell due, of course through Suzavals from Oudh. When Ahmad Shah became Emperor, Sufdur Jung was made his Vazir and subsequently deposed. With a revengeful spirit and by way of establishing himself as an independant sovereign of Oudh, Sufdar Jung, resolved to amalgamate the kingdom of Benares into his own, reducing its Raja to a mere zamindar. Knowing or anticipating all this perhaps, when the Nawab's Suzavals appeared for collection of Royal revenue, Raja Balwant Singh, with the help of Prithweeput of Pratabgirh, drove them away. without paying the revenue. Enraged at this, the Nawab was endeavouring to expell the Raja, but by great adroitness energy and courage, the latter managed to maintain his independence, although, as a punishment, Chunar was wrested from him and given away to a favourite Afghan.

Raja Balwant Sing's attention was now directed towards the subjugation of Jaswant Sing, Rajput Chief of Bhudohee, in the Allahabad territory. Since Mansa Ram's time, he had been one of those high-minded zamindars that did not care to acknowledge his authority over the province, and, even now and then, raided into the adjoining estates, causing great damages. A splendid opportunity presented itself for his interference, in the courted application for help of one Roostam Khan, to revenge the latter's grudge against Jaswant Singh. Accordingly, a large army under the command of Roostam Khan, supplemented by another of Raja Prithweeput of Pratabgarh, an old friend of Raja Balwant Singh, advanced on the fort of Buddohee. JaswantSingh defended the fort ably from within for a time, but over-awed by the inequal match, attempted to escape, but was caught by the vigilent Roostam Khan, imprisoned, and finally killed in satisfaction of his private grudge. The fort which fell subsequently, was occupied by Balwant Singh and amils deputed to take charge of the adjoining estates.

Nawab Ally Kooly Khan of Allahabad, within whose territory was Budhohee, was greatly enraged at Balwant Singh, and with a view to punish him, invaded his territory. But Balwant Singh's better councils advising him not to offer battle then, he retired into Lateefpur and busied himself secretly collecting a large army. Ally Kooly Khan, finding his immediate objects fail, went to Budhohee, drove away the Rajah's men and placed the fort in charge of his own men, and returned to Allahabad.

As soon as the Nawab's back was turned towards Budhohee it was re-occupied by an army sent by Balwant Singh; yet the Nawab was literally unable to do any harm to the Rajah, until he opened hostilities, some time later, when the sons of the vanquished Majhowa chiefs joined him. Perceiving that he could not fightsuccessfully with the allied forces, Balwant Singh secretly connived at causing disunion in the Nawab's camp and thereby managed to gain the day over the Nawab and his allies. The Nawab fled with the remnants of his shattered army to Allahabad, while Ganee Singh, the only surviving member of the Majohwan family ran towards Bettiah, saving his life.

The events that immediately followed, shook the position of Raja Balwant Singh causing him serious damages, as it did affect, perhaps, in a still more striking manner, the interests of the Nawab Vazir of Oudh. For, the Afghans had defeated the Nawab Vazir and killed or drove away some of his valuable allies; and had also taken possession of all the Vazir's propetry, and provinces, while Ahmed Khan himself was beseiging the fort of Allahabad, his son Mohamad Khan was put in charge of the provinces of Oudh, and Sahib Zaman Khan, his brother-in-law. a Risaldar in the service of Raja Balwant Singh, was ordered to drive away the latter and occupy his provinces. Balwant Singh, who had scented the changes in government, wisely professed great friendship to Zaman and his brother, and even offerred to help him in the transfer of the provinces, provided he would be allowed to rule as Zaman's deputy. But when once Zaman khan had left Balwant Singh's service, his ideas changed; and while he was planning his future programme, a second order was received to expell Balwant Singh immediately. Accordingly, Zaman Khan, assisted by the additional force from Ahmad Shah and those of the Raja of Azamgarh, proceeded on Jaunpoor, after a plunder of the small fort of Shuranpur. Not being a very strong fort, that of Jaunpur, fell into the besieger's hands, though after a well fought struggle. The province was immediately occupied by Zaman Khan's soldiery. Had Zaman Khan immediately chased Balwant Singh, he would have easily got him and his provinces, but when, instead, he engaged himself otherwise, Balwant Singh bettered his position in such a way that he was confident of repelling further attacks.

The arrival of Ahmad Shah at Allahabad suggested to the confused,yet, farseeing Balwant Singh, the advisability of courting his favour, for the time being, which he did successfully, though he was forced to give away half of his provinces to Zaman Khan. But this arrangement was not to last long, for the Nawab Vazir, collecting a large army, advanced to releive the besiged fort of Allahabad. At sight of the Nawab's huge army, Ahmad Shah ran away in disgrace, and the plucky Balwant Singh very cleverly cornered Zaman Khan, near Jaunpur, to a practical surrender, but the latter having escaped, all his property was freely plundered by the Rajah's troops. We must here

mention, yet, to the great credit of Balwant Singh, that when the unsuccessful Zaman Khan, once more appeared near Jaunpur, after a short time, he was well received and was re-instated in his original zamindary.

The Nawab Vazir, now free from the Afghan raids, with a view to punish Rajas Prithweepath and Balwant Singh, for their refusal to pay the revenue and chiefly for their submitting to Ahmad Shah, went first to Sultanpur. The well-meaning Prithweepath presented himself, unarmed, and while engaged in conversation with the Nawab, was stabbed in the left by Ally Beg Khan; and the Raja promptly fell upon the assassin, biting his cheek, but fell down dead with a piece of flesh in his mouth, like an infuriated tiger. Greatly pleased, the Nawab marched to Jaunpur and sent for Raja Balwant Singh. But the latter, who had heard of Prithweepath's sad end, had already retired with his family and valuables, into the hilly fortresses, to the south of the Ganges. He would not come in spite of several summonses from the Nawab. But he sent a nuzzar and promises to pay an increased revenue, and requested the Nawab to confirm him in his possessions. The Nawab, much enraged at finding his objects frustrated, went to Gangapur, plundered its wealth and razed it to the ground, rendering it thereby unsuitable for immediate occupation. Yet other messages were sent to Raja Balwant Singh with strong assurances of safety, and the only reply was " that no one that went to the Lord, had ever come back". Under the circumstances, the Nawab, who had other more important work in his own province, had to accept Raja Balwant Singh's terms and confirm him in his Zamindary, with Noor-ool-Hussan as the Suzawal.

Finding out that Gangapur could no more suit him, Balwant Singh ordered the erection of a fort in Ramnagar, on the right side of the Ganges. All his Risaldars and officers of the court were comfortably accomodated in the new town.

He next laid seige to the Patita fort, about 6 miles east of Chunar, which, after a brief resistance, fell into his hands. The fort of Ahrorah was next attacked and taken possession of in a similar manner. Malik Ahmed its master, was killed by the soldiers, in escaping from the fort; at this news, his brother in Lateefpur, got alarmed of his safety, and with a weak heart, evacuated the fort, himself flying for life towards Zamania. Thus, without great exertion on his part, and even as he wished to have, Raja Balwant Singh obtained possession of the strongholds of Lateefpur, and Patita, the two strongholds on the two approaches to the, otherwise, inaccessible fort of Bijiagarh, for the possession of which, he next planned.

With this object in view he instructed his officers to clear the adjoining country of Bijiagarh; and the successful raids of his active soldiery were carried so far, that, in a short time, a clear-cut road through the intense jungle to the Fort of Bijiagarh, was in their hands. The owner of the fort, Bijaya Singh, not being himself of a warlike spirit, was easily induced to sell it to Balwant Singh for a sum of Rupees fifty thousand.

The three newly acquired forts were then put under proper repairs, under charge of Baijnath Singh, a trusted officer, who always acted as the sole custodian of the Raja's treasures. The forts, ere long, became fully equipped with defensive positions and the

valuables and treasures of Balwant Singh, were safely deposited in Bijiagarh. About the same time, another fort, Agoree, belonging to a relation of Bijia Singh, on the Sone river bank was also obtained and fortified by Baijnath Singh, with four bastions.

We have already noticed that Dasaram, a brother of Mansa Ram and a Tahsildar of Sheopur, fled from fear of arrest by Balwant Singh on suspicion. He took refuge under Daim Khan of Kyra Mungror, who was himself driven out of his possessions in Benares, by Namwar Khan and Himut Khan, under the orders of the Emperor. In fact, Daim Khan who was jealous of the rise of Mansa Ram and Balwant Singh, welcomed Dasaram and even secured him the lease of Chinpur. But Dasaram treacherously attacked Daim Khan, in an unguarded moment, drove him out of his zamindary, and occupied everything himself. Yet, he was soon overpowered, captured alive and carried away as prisoner by Raja Rajaroop a friend of Daim Khan who was now restored; yet the plucky Balwant Singh, changed the state of affairs, very soon by advancing on Daim Khan and ally, with a large army, while Rajaroop, unwilling to face such odds, yielded to terms, surrendering Dasaram, Balwant Singh's uncle, Daim Khan having fled leaving his province in the undisputed possession of Balwant Singh, who had them confirmed in his own name undertaking payment of its revenue direct to the Nawab at Patna. This tract was subsequently made a family estate with rent free tenure by the Emperor, and continued to be inherited by successive Rajahs.

The subjugation of Shaik Kabool Mohamad, Zamindar of Muchlushupur and Himat Bahadur, Zamindar of Garwara, was the next important event of Raja Balwant Singh's reign, ere the Nawab Vazir Sufdur Jung, died.

Now Balwant Singh made private arrangements to obtain possession of the fort at Chunar, which was originally an integral part of his own dominions. When the news reached the ears of the new Nawab Shoojah-ood-Dowlah, he forthwith came to Benares to punish the Raja; but, the latter having, hid himself, in the usual manner in the hills, Fazul Ali of Gazeepur was ordered to expell Balwant Singh from his dominions and to keep them himself, in addition to Gazeepur. Greatly pleased at this suggestion, that might very soon, raise him also to the position of a Nawab, and relying much on his early acquaintance with Shooja-Ood-Dowlah, he applied for a large sum of money and army to accomplish the expulsion of Balwant Singh.

While the Nawab was considering the proposal of Fazal Ali, Mohamed Alee Khan, a favourite of the Nawab, prejudiced him against Fazul Ali as being not only an incapable person but also a careless and irregular paymaster. Accordingly, Balwant Singh was once more confirmed in his estate, but by a nuzzar of five lakhs of rupees and an increased revenue by five lakhs. The Risaldar Lal Khan that was sent by Balwant Singh, so pleased the Nawab, that he managed to obtain besides, the Jaghirry of Bhudohee to his master.

Having thus secured himself firmly, Balwant Singh applied to Raja Beni Bahadur for help to expell and ruin Fazal Ali, for his daring offer to dispossess the Raja of Benares. This was easily agreed to by Beni Bahadur, since he too had a grudge against Fazal Ali. When, at the appointed hour, Raja Beni Bahadur and Raja Balwant

Singh joined forces and marched on Fazal Ali, the latter, in a most cowardly manner, fled from the province, leaving all his valued possessions to the mercy of the invaders. The Province was immediately distributed on fixed rents amongst the sirdars and the personal property of Fazal Ali, in Gazeepur and elsewhere was taken by the victors. Thus did Balwant Singh get back Gazeepur which Mansa Ram had to loose in favour of Shaik Abdooldah.

Doorbijaya Singh, Zamindar of Chousa, relying on the strength and inaccessibility of his fortress of Seringha, evaded payment of revenue to Balwant Singh's amils, and even drove out troops sent for the purpose. Balwant Singh obtained the help of Ramnarayin and of an European regiment from Patna, and laid seige to the fort which surrendered after a long struggle. Doorbijaya Singh was captured by the English commandant while escaping, and taken awây as prisoner, while hls fort and property fell into the hands of Balwant Singh.

The next event of note was the ejection of Vikramajeet from Pergannah Kantit in the Subah of Allahabad, for inability to pay a loan advanced to him through Balwant Singh, and the anexation of his province on promise of paying its revenue direct to the Nawab at Allahabad.

About the year 1754, Ahmad Shah, the Emperor, was blinded and deposed by Gias-ud-din, the Vazir, who raised a member of the royal blood as Alamgir, the Emperor. His son, the heir-apparent named Mohamed Ali Gorhi, disagreeing with the Emperor and his Vazir, left Delhi, joined the Nawab Vazir atOudh and both the Prince and Vazir, planned the conquest and ânnexation of Bengal and other eastern provinces, expelling the Nawab Mir Jaffir and his allies, the English, out of the country. Accordingly, they marched on Patna, with a large army. The Emperor, on hearing this, ordered Mir Jaffir of Bengal and other feudatory chiefs, to check the progress of the invading army, to seize the person of the Prince, and to punish his adherents. Mir Jaffir, aided by a British army, went to Patna, in 1759, and drove back the invading army. But the Nawab Vazir, encouraging the Prince for a fresh attack, they reapeated it in the next year as well. Yet, they were promptly repulsed by Mir Jaffir and were driven back into Oudh ; in which operation, it is said, Rajah Balwant Singh of Benares, helped Mir Jaffir, in obedience to the orders of his Leige Lord, the Emperor.

Rajah Balwant Singh, with a view to turn the new aquaintance with Mir Jaffir and the English, to advantage, opened negotiations for a triple alliance which was approved both by the Nawab and Major Carnac, the British commander of troops. Accordingly, early in 1764, an agreement of a treaty of alliance with Mir Jaffir and the British Commander was arrived at, and confirmed with the consent of the Government at Calcutta. The Government which agreed to the proposal of Major Carnac thus informed its resolutions:—

"Having duly considered the letter of Major Carnac, we are unanimously of opinion that as Shuja-ud-Dowlah having openly avowed his designs of aiding Kassim Ali Khan in invading Bengal, it is our duty to form against him all the enemies we possibly can that the proposed alliance with Balwant Singh will, therefore, be a very proper

measure, and prove, as well now as in all time to come, a strong barrier and defence to the Bengal Provinces. Agreed, therefore, that we write to Major Carnac, advising him that we shall approve entirely of his entering into the intended treaty in concert with the Nawab Mir Jaffir, and of his engaging to protect and maintain Bulwant Sing independant both now and hereafter." (Hist. of the Prov. of Benares).

On receipt of the above sanction from his Government, Major Carnac, immediately entered into the treaty with Balwant Singh as originally agreed upon, but without Mir Jaffir.

The Emperor Alamgir died about this time, and the Prince, succeeded to his father's throne as Shah Alum. Shujah-ood-Dowlah, an old friend of the Emperor's younger days, when raised to be his Vazir, exercised much influence over him. Amongst others, he was induced to help Mir Kassim Ali, in waging war against Mir Jaffir and the English. Though the Emperor, who had seen the power of the English, was not in favour of his Vazir's suggestion, yet, under obligation to the Vazir, a large army was collected, and taken across to Patna under the joint command of the Emperor and the Vazir of Oudh. Raja Balwant Singh too had, under Imperial orders, to march along with the invading army, in spite of his great aversion and fear to Nawab Vazir. His army was attached to that of Raja Beni Bahadar, a trusted officer of the Nawab Vazir, and an intimate friend and will-wisher of Balwant Singh. Both the Rajahs were in charge of entrenchments before Patna and were supposed to attack the army of the English and Mir jaffir, while passing. On the other hand, while the English army marched past the said entrenchments, they were not attacked by Raja Beni Bahadur who was under Balwant Singh's friendly influence. So the English army, marching on the Nawab's army unopposed, effected a thorough defeat on the latter, at Baharee, near Patna and drove the enemy far out of sight. The Nawab Vazir suspecting the attitude of Balwant Singh separated Raja Beni Bahadur, and posted Balwant Singh, to watch the English near Buxar. When Major Munro, the immediate successor of Major Carnac, crossed the Carumnassa, as originally planned by his predecessor, to offer battle to the Nawab Vazir, the contending armies, met at Buxar, which too ended in a decisive victory for the English, causing great confusion and loss of life and property in the Nawab's army.

The Vazir, disagreeing with the Emperor, left him alone, and fled towards his own territory. Upon this, the Emperor approached the British Commander with a letter of proposals for a treaty of alliance to help him in driving the Nawab Vazir out of Oudh, and in the restoratiou of all his usurped provinces to the Imperial Kingdom.

In fowarding the Emperor's proposals to his goverment on the 22nd Nov. 1764, Major Munro, pointed out the advisability under the circumstances, of agreeing with the Emperor's views, and of attempting to place the territory hitherto forming the Nizamut of the Subadar of Oudh, with the exception of the kingdom of Benares, under the immediate authority of the Emperor, driving the Vazir out. In reply to the above, the government after due consideration, communicated to Major Munro, on the 6th December 1764, that "We are extremely glad to find the king has joined you, and approve of the plan which you have laid down for establishing him in the possession of Shuja-ood-Dowla's, country.

With regard to Balwant Singh, we shall adhere to the terms which you have thought it necessary to make with him; but in our view, so far as it can be done consistently with your engagements to have the power and authority over this Rajah and his Zemindaries vested in the Company by sunnuds from the King,holding them under him with the same rights and in as full a manner as enjoyed by Shuja-ood-Dowlah, and that the whole rents so collected shall be appropriated for the use of the Company, and wrote off from the books of the King's Revenues. With this view we have caused the following articles to be drawn up, to be executed by the king:—In consideration of the assistance and fidelity of the English company, which has freed us from the inconveniences we laboured under, and strengthened the foundations of the Empire which God has given us, we have been graciously pleased to grant to the English Company our royal favours, according to the followlng articles, which shall remain firm both at present and in future. As the English Company have been put to great expense, and their affairs exposed to danger, by the war which the Nawab Shujah-ul-Dowlah unjustly, and contrary to our royal pleasure, waged against them, we have therefore assigned to them the country of Gazeepore, and the rest of the zemindary of Raja Balwant Singh, belonging to the Nizamut of the Nawab Shujah-ul-Dowlah, and the regulation and government thereof we have given to their disposal in the same manner as it was in the Nawab Shujah-ul-Dowlah. The aforesaid Rajah having settled terms with the chiefs of the English Company, is therefore to pay the revenues to the Company, and the amount shall not belong to the Books of the Royal Revenue, but shall be expunged from them. The army of the English Company, having joined our standard, shall put us in possession of Allahabad, and the rest of the countries belonging to the Nizamut of the Nawab Shuja-ul-Dowlah. The revenues, excepting those of Rajah Balwant Singh's territories, shall be in our entire management and disposal."

Accordingly, the Emperor agreed and the treaty of alliance with the English Company, was duly signed and confirmed on the 29th December 1764.

By this agreement of alliance between the Emperor Shah Alum and the English Company, the Kingdom of Benares became a British feudatory being transferred to them by the then sole legitimate Sovereign of India. So the revenues were paid by Rajah Balwant Singh into the British territory, instead of, as heretofore, into that of the Emperor at Delhi, through the Nawab of Oudh.

In the meantime. at the suggestion of Rajah Balwant Singh, and in quite conformity with the two treaties mentioned above, Major Munro, laid seige to the fort of Chunar, previously, an integral part of the Rajah's; but was not successful, loosing greater number of men. So, the seige was raised, especially as Major Munro heard of the arrival of the Nawab Vazir with a large army, for the help of the beseiged. The British army retreated to Benares and was stationed in its vicinity, where it remained for about two months. During this period Raja Balwant Singh had ample opportunities of exhibiting his utility in the protection given the army, from the bands of the Nawab's army, howering in the neighbourhood, and in the supply of ample provisions and other supplies needed by the British army. The Rajah. in fact, proved the good and faithful ally that so entwined his interests with that of the British.

When, towards the middle of January 1765, Sir Robert Fletcher, the new Commander-in-Chief, joined the army, another successful attempt was made on Chunar, which, after a strong resistance, surrendered, though with the intervention of the Emperor, who was then encamped at Mirzapur, on his way to Allahabad. The chieftains of the fort, Bushar Khan and Baloo Khan, being ordered by the Emperor to evacuate the fort, in favour of his allies, the English, retired by a private entrance with all their valuables, leaving it in the possession of the beseigers.

The Nawab Vazir was once more defeated by the English army, at Kora, upon which, he sought peace, surrendering himself to the English General.

By this time, Lord Clive, arrived in India, as Governor-General. with full power; and he proceeded at once to Allahabad, to receive the submission of the Nawab Vazir. In the treaty that was now entered into with Shujah-ul Dowlah, by Lord Clive, the previous settlement of the President in Council at Calcutta, with the Emperor, was set aside, and the Nawab Vazir was re-instated with all his original authority in the Nizamut of Oudh The interests of Raja Balwant Singh. the ally of the British, was carefully included in the treaty, binding the Nawab for the strict observance of the Rajah's independance, as heretofore under the British.

In spite of his grudge to Balwant Singh, and his many requests to be left alone for any arrangement with the Raja, to himself without interfering, the Nawab, was not spared, and was offered the acceptance of the treaty only on condition of his protecting Balwant Singh as an independant feudatory, bearing in mind the latter's close relationship with the British.

So, the treaty of 1765, made Balwant Singh, once more a dependant chief, subject to the freaks of the Nawab Vazir, though backed by the firm allegiance with the English.

The Nawab Vazir went away to Fyzabad after signing the treaty referred to already, when Lord Clive wrote to him to come down to Patna, since he desired to see him once before he left India finally. At this, the Nawab thought he might now have, at the friendly interview, a chance of expelling Balwant Singh's case from the terms of the treaty, but only in vain. For, Balwant Singh was already in Lord Clive's camp in his favour and that of his officers. When the Nawab expressed his desire about Balwant Singh, Lord Clive did not favour the proposal, and yet, to please the Nawab, he secured from Balwant Singh a promise to pay an increase of three lakhs in the annual revenue, provided no further interference would be made.

A covenant confirming Raja Balwant Singh in his dominions, without further interference in his revenue than the three lakhs of rupees now added to it, was signed by the Nawab Vazir, bearing the counter attestations of Lord Clive and other officers. At the same time also, Chunar was returned to the Nawab, getting Allahabad for the British, in exchange.

The next and perhaps the last important event that happened during the lifetime of Raja Balwant Singh, was the unsuccessful attempt of the Nawab Vazir, through

his influence with the then Governor-General, Mr. Cartier, while in Benares, to seize Balwant Singh, and to ruin him entirely. The Nawab, whose hatred for Balwant Singh had been daily increasing, especially, since his suspicious attitude at Buharee and Buxar, was eagerly waiting for an opportunity to crush him; and when he thought that Mr. Cartier might tolerate him, he cunningly suggested settling terms with the Raja, without the interference of the English. Accordingly, the Nawab laid a bait to catch him unarmed, during one of his usual visits at his Durbar. Of late, owing to the presence of the British Officers in camp, Raja Balwant Singh, used to go to the Nawab's Durbar without much fear. Taking advantage of this, when, one day, all preparations were made to get hold of his person, the cautious Balwant Singh, who had already scented the Nawab's intentions, evaded seizure, just at the moment, in a very remarkable manner and rushed to the presence of the Governor. The distressed Nawab yet closely followed Balwant Singh, hoping he might catch him anywhere on the road. But, both entered the Governor's camp almost simultaneously, when, noticing the confused state of Balwant Singh, with the Nawab at his heels, he was smartly taken aside by the Governor's officers and the reasons for the unhappy chase were ascertained. A compromise was at last effected between the Nawab and the Raja, after learning the cause of the misunderstanding, confirming Balwant Singh in his territories with a renewed covenant. Yet, when Raja Balwant Singh was presented to the Nawab by the English officers, he forthwith demanded of the Raja, a loan of 15 lakhs of rupees, which however was reduced to 10, allowing the same to be deducted from his instalments of revenue.

Thus, Raja Balwant Singh, the son and successor of Mansa Ram, the founder of the Present Raj family of Benares, was maintained and supported from mischievous aggressors, by the benign British Government, even in the early years of their sway in India. The great claims of Raja Balwant Singh on the Government for the "signal and important services rendered by him to the affairs and interests of Great Britain," and the great care with which the Government maintained his integrity during long and troublous times, deserves special mention.

During his eventful and long reign of thirty eight years, Raja Balwant Singh, not only secured to his immediate successor, a powerful kingdom, but also established, for the continued prosperity of his family, a rare relationship with the ever dominating British Government.

We may say, with strong convictions, that, but for the clever management by Balwant Singh, during his life time, of the affairs of his kingdom, with the help of the British, his illustrious family, whose honored representatives, very creditably, still adorn Kasi, the most ancient of Indian cities, might have been extinguished, (which the Almighty, luckily forbade), subject as it was to the wanton cruelty of the whimsical Nawabs of Oudh.

The Brilliant Chief Balwant Singh, Raja Bahadur of Benares, Jaunpur, Gazeepur, Chunar etc., died in a good old age, on the 22nd August 1770, in his Palace, at Ramnagar, surrounded by a large family and friends and officers.

On the death of Balwant Singh, there was a great confusion as to who may succeed to the compact and flourishing kingdom of Benares &c., for, Maniar Singh, a nephew, Maheep Narayan Singh, a grandson by his only legitimate daughter, and Cheit Singh, a son by a Rajput Lady, were amongst the immediate claimants, and they were all encouraged by Raja Balwant Singh, while alive. In spite of the more lawful claims of Maniar Singh, and Maheep Narayan Singh, that of Cheit Singh, was held up by Ousan Singh, then the most influential of all the officers.

So, while Maniar Singh and other members of the Royal family were busy with the cremation of the deceased Raja in Manikarnika Ghat, on the Benares side of the Ganges, Ousan Singh, collected all his friendly officers to strengthen the cause of Cheit Singh and established himself in a strong position, that the other claimants, on their return, dare not interfere with.

The favour of Shuja-ul-Dowlah, the Nawab Vazir, was also secured by handsome Nuzzars submitted through Syed Nooral Husan and Elich Khan, at whose suggestion, the Nawab, went to Benares and Ramnagar, to see the young Cheit Singh duly raised to his father's position.

" A British Officer, with a battalion of Sepoys, was, as soon as the intelligence reached the Government, despatched to Benares on behalf of the British Government, to be present at these negotiations, and to see that no coercion was exercised over the new Rajah. Through the intervention of the British Government, the enormous demands of the Vazir were reduced, on the 8th September 1770, to a nuzzeranah of seventeen lakhs, and an annual increase of two and a half lakhs on the tribute as settled by the treaty of 1765 "

Thus Cheit Singh was vested with the full powers of Government of his father's dominions, accepted and acknowledged by the Nawab Vazir in person, though not without the favourable recommendation and protection of the British. Yet, he was not allowed to enjoy his provinces without frequent and dangerous interferece on the part of the greedy Nawab Vazir, who really desired to destroy him, and to annex his dominions. Cheit Singh, had therefore, on various occasions, to seek the help of the English, which was as often freely given. At this, the Government decided the advisability of enforcing the Nawab, for the strict observance of the terms of the treaty between them, in respect to Benares, and deputed Warren Hastings to attend to it. Accordingly, in the year 1773, the Vazir was made to give to the Rajah, in fullfiment of the terms of the treaty already refered to, a separate Coulnamah confirming him and heirs in the permanant enjoyment of his father's, kingdom.

Two years afterwards, Nawab Shujah-ul-Dowlah, died and was succeeded by his son Asof-ul-Dowlah, who too, following the example of his father, teased the young Rajah, with frequent demands for large sums of money in addition to the settled revenue. When this news reached the ears of the Government at Calcutta, measures were taken, for prompt action so that, the new Nawab Asof-ul-Dowlah, was, as if out of his own free will induced to give away to the English, the four circars of Jaunpur, Chunar, Gazeepur and Benares etc., on the same tenure as it was held by himself.

Having been thus possesed of the wealthy provinces of Benares, Jaunpur etc., the Governor General, with the consent of the President in Council, deputed, an agent to Benares, (Mr. Foulke) with instructions to present the Rajah, with a khillut and to instal him as Rajah, having first notified to him the sovereignty of the Company over all his territories, receiving a Nuzzar of Rs 10,000, on account of the Company. The Rajah, was not made to pay under this new arrangement, any higher revenue than what he was finally paying to the Nawab. Besides, he was also entrusted with the supervision of the Mint, which privilege was not allowed even to Balwant Singh. He was left free in the management of his kingdom excepting as regards the regular payment of revenue and a resident Suzawal in Benares. It must be here noted that, after great discussion in the council "It was rulled that this was a treaty, and the documents therefore received the signature of the Governor-General and all the members of the council."

With all the attempts of Cheit Singh, young as he was, to establish himself firmly in his father's dominions, his want of foresight, determination and courage entangled him into a series of misunderstandings with his noble and proud relatives, and other close adherents of his wise father, and more so, since, out of fear for Ousan Singh, he entrusted him with high powers, which were misused. As an immediate result of the haughty demeanour of Ousan Singh, a serious confusion arose amongst the Baboos of the late Rajah's family, in connection with an invitation by Cheit Singh, made at the instigation of Ousan Singh, for joint messing on an important occasion. In the disturbance that arose Ousan Singh, not having the pluck and courage to stand firm, fled the country, in spite of requests to the contrary, by Cheit Singh, and wandered in different parts. While on his way to Allahabad, he was identified and taken to Maniar Singh, whose brother wished to kill him then and there for his past actions. But he was spared at the intervention of good Maniar Singh; who was, in the turn, assured by Ousan Singh of being helped to Cheit Singh's place. After a little wandering in the neighbourhood, they both went to Lucknow, to interview the Nawab through Ilich Khan. But Cheit Singh, hearing of their motives, succeeded through the said Ilich Khan, to arrest them; but Maniar Singh submitted and was well received by Cheit Singh in Ramnagar, while Ousan Singh escaped to Patna, on his way to Calcutta, but, not having the Governor-General's permission, had to wait at Murshidabad till fortune smiled on him.

Further, the Rajah's Vakeel in Calcutta, had been courting the favour of General Clavering and other antagonists of the Governor-General in Council, hoping thereby to attain better gains for his principal. But, unfortunately for Cheit Singh, on the death of Colonel Monson and General Clavering, the Governor-General was in a majority in the Council, who now decided to punish him for his secret attention to his enemies. With this view, Mr. Foulke was recalled and Mr. Thomas Graham, a friend of the Governor-General, was appointed as Suzawal in Benares.

"The Rajah's Vakeel was turned out of Calcutta, and Mr. Graham was ordered to eject from Benares, Bhaeeram Mahajan, Cheit Singh's adviser, and, further, was directed to loose no opportunity of injuring the Rajah. Still further to lower the Rajah's pride, Ousan Singh, who was lying in distress in Murshidabad, and whose

relations were in confinement and suffering a thousand indignities, at Ramnagar, was sent a gift of a 'Doshala' and a letter saying that his innocence was well-known to the Governor-General, and that he was to return without fear to Benares and await further orders. To Raja Cheit Singh orders were sent that Ousan Singh being a friend of the Company's, his relations must be at once released from confinement, and a Jaghir amply sufficient for their wants given them.

Mr. Graham "swimming with the tide and taking his cue from the temper of the Governor-General, treated Cheit Singh with great harshness and annoyed him by every means in his powers". Sensitive of his former conduct towards the Governor-General, Cheit Singh submitted to the orders of Mr Graham, and dismissed Bhaeeram and turned him out of his territoris with all his people. He set free Ousan Singh's relatives, providing a big jaghir to Ousan Singh. In fact, he submitted being always in fear to every servant and deputy of Mr. Graham, squandering large sums of money as presents to them to keep the resident in good temper. Amongst others that took advantage of Cheit Singh's terrified position, were, first Rajah Imrit Singh, an exile from Murshidabad, and afterwards the treacherous exactors, Ali-ood-deen Kabeera, and Moulvi Zein-ool-abdeen, who always were accelerating the impending ruin of Cheit Singh in every possible manner. Seeing that Ali-ood-deen, enjoyed Mr. Graham's favours the Rajah allowed Rs. 500 a month for himself and Rs. 300 a month for Zein-ool-abdeen and one hundred match lock men as their guards. It is said, that at time of enforcing the Rajah to settle a jaghir in favour of Ousan Singh, Ali-ood-deen extracted from him a sum of Rs. 45,000. Another interesting incident exhibiting the funny and arbitrary manner in which Ali-ood-deen exercised his influence over the Rajah may be mentioned in passing. The Moulvi presented himself suddenly before the Rajah one day, and represented to him "that Mr. Graham was sick, and his doctor had prescribed for him the oil of red-ants, and that the Rajah was to order his people to collect within four or five days about seven pounds weight of red-ant's heads and send them, or else he would greatly displease Mr. Graham. The Rajah on hearing this order became black in the face, and said, "Why was not the oil of Phoenix prescribed"? It would be difficult to collect half a pound weight of red-ants at any time, much more so to get seven pounds weight of their heads, and being a Brahmin, I cannot give orders to destroy the life of millions of animals." The Moulvie, withdrawing a little from the Rajah said, "I now see this manifestation of your wickedness. Have I not told you a thousand times that whatever orders I bring must be obeyed and that you will find no resource but to obey them. The Rajah looked at me (Fakir Khair-ud-Din-Khan) and made signs with his eyes, on which I said ; Maulvi Sahib, you have complete influence over Mr. Graham, and I am sure you could manage that some other remedy be prescribed for him. The Maulvi replied that he did possess great influence with Mr. Graham ; and at length the Rajah whispered something in Sudanand Buksh's ear, and he beckoned the Moulvi to another room, from whence he came out and went away highly pleased." It was afterwards ascertained by Fakir-Khair-ud-Din-Khan, from Ali-ood-Deen himself that he got Rs. 3,500, on the occasion to get exemption from the order. Such was the miserable state into which Rajah Cheit Singh had been cornered by the extraordinary circumstances, caused by his own mismanagement of affairs, that he had practically not one confidential or trustworthy adviser who could have relieved him out

of his difficulties. While Chiet Singh was labouring under such difficulties, most unfortunately for him, intelligence arrived from Europe, in July 1778, of the breaking out of war with the French, which greatly perplexed the Governor-General in Council, as to provide for the safety of the Indian acquisitions. Amongst others, it was decided in the council, at the suggestion of Mr. Graham and at the full recommendation of the Governor General, that the Raja of Benares, must be required to pay a subsidy of 5 lakhs of rupees, during the continuance of the war, as his contribution towards the Imperial expenses.

When Mr. Graham called upon the Rajah, to demand five lakhs of rupees, as decided by the President in Council, he pleaded inability for immediate compliance and petitioned for payment in instalments. This was not agreed to, and when a peremptory demand for immediate payment was made by Mr. Graham, the Rajah remitted through his vakeel, bills of exchange to the Government at Calcutta.

A similar demand of five lakhs of rupees was made in the year following, which too, the Rajah had to pay, though not until a nearest British Regiment approached Ramnagar.

The demand was repeated for the third time in 1880, with an additional requisition to furnish a body of 2,000 cavalry, for their operations against Scindia.

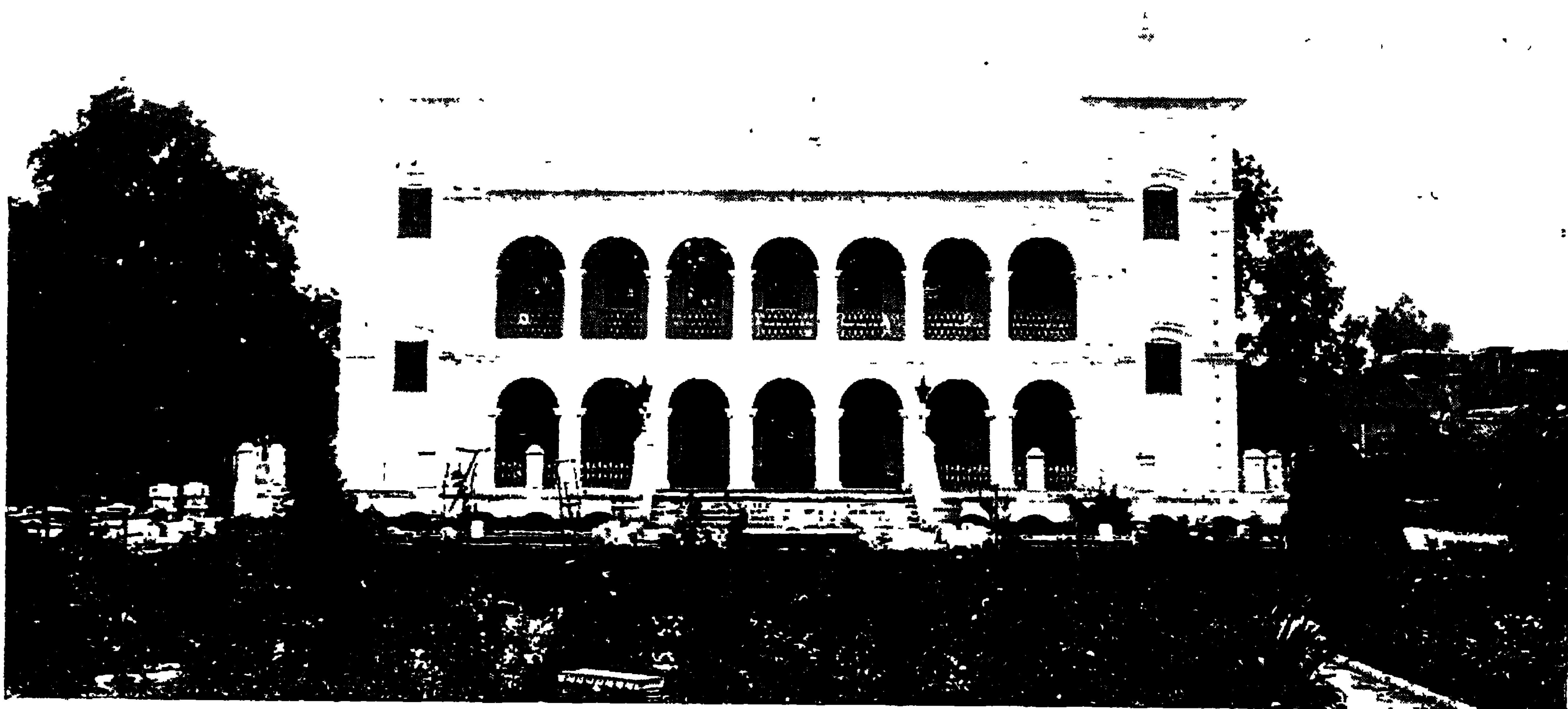
At the same time, reports were sent to the Government that the Rajah was in great arrears, besides, in the matter of revenue; consequently, strict orders were sent for the complete clearing up of all such arrears within twenty-four hours. It was decided, further, at the Council, that, to rectify finally, the affairs of the Rajah, the Governor-General must proceed at once to Benares, " with full power and authority to form such arrangements with the Rajah of Benares for the better Government and management of his territory, and to perform such acts for the improvement of the interest which the Hon'ble Company possesses in it, as he shall think fit, and consonant to the mutual and actual engagements subsisting between the Company and the Rajah." (History of the Province of Benares).

In the meanwhile, by order of the Honorable Court of Directors, Mr. Foulke was re-appointed on the 17th February 1780, in place of Mr. Graham. This arrangement gave Cheit Singh a little over-confidence in his old friend Mr. Foulke, and in consequeuce the Rajah, with great short-sightedness, did not send his brother Soojan Singh, to Calcutta to attend on the Governor General, as advised by Mr. Vansittart, during his tour with Sir Eyre Coote. After a series of advisory letters through Fakir Khair-ud-Din Khan, from Mr. Vansittart, Rajah Cheit Singh sent Sadanund Bukshi, and not Soojan Singh. Bukshi foolishly wasted time and money on his attendance on Mr. Foulke, who was now in Calcutta, Mr. Markhan having been appointed, by the Governor General} for his post in Benares. Mr. Foulke, who was a friend of Mr. Francis, and personally unknown to the Governor General, could not help Bukshi in any manner, though such a procedure only displeased the Governor-General. Had Bukshee gone to Mr. Vansittart for whom the Governor-General had a great liking, he might have gained his objects. On the

contrary, though Bukshi was given an interview, after all, the Governor-General dismissed, him immediately, saying that Cheit Singh's affairs would be gone through leisurely, and communicated to him through the Resident.

The failure of Bukshi with the Governor-General on behalf of his Principal, encouraged Mr. Markham, the new Resident, to treat the Rajah with greater harshness, while he represented to the Governor-General about the fabulous wealth of the Rajah, stored in Bijiagarh, and Lateefpur by his father, and suggested that all the cost of the war might be extracted from the Rajah.

About this time, the Governor-General had started from Calcutta, on his tour, as originally decided; when, at the suggestion of the good Mr. Vansittart, Fakir Khair-Ud-Din-Khan, visited Cheit Singh in his palace and advised him to meet the

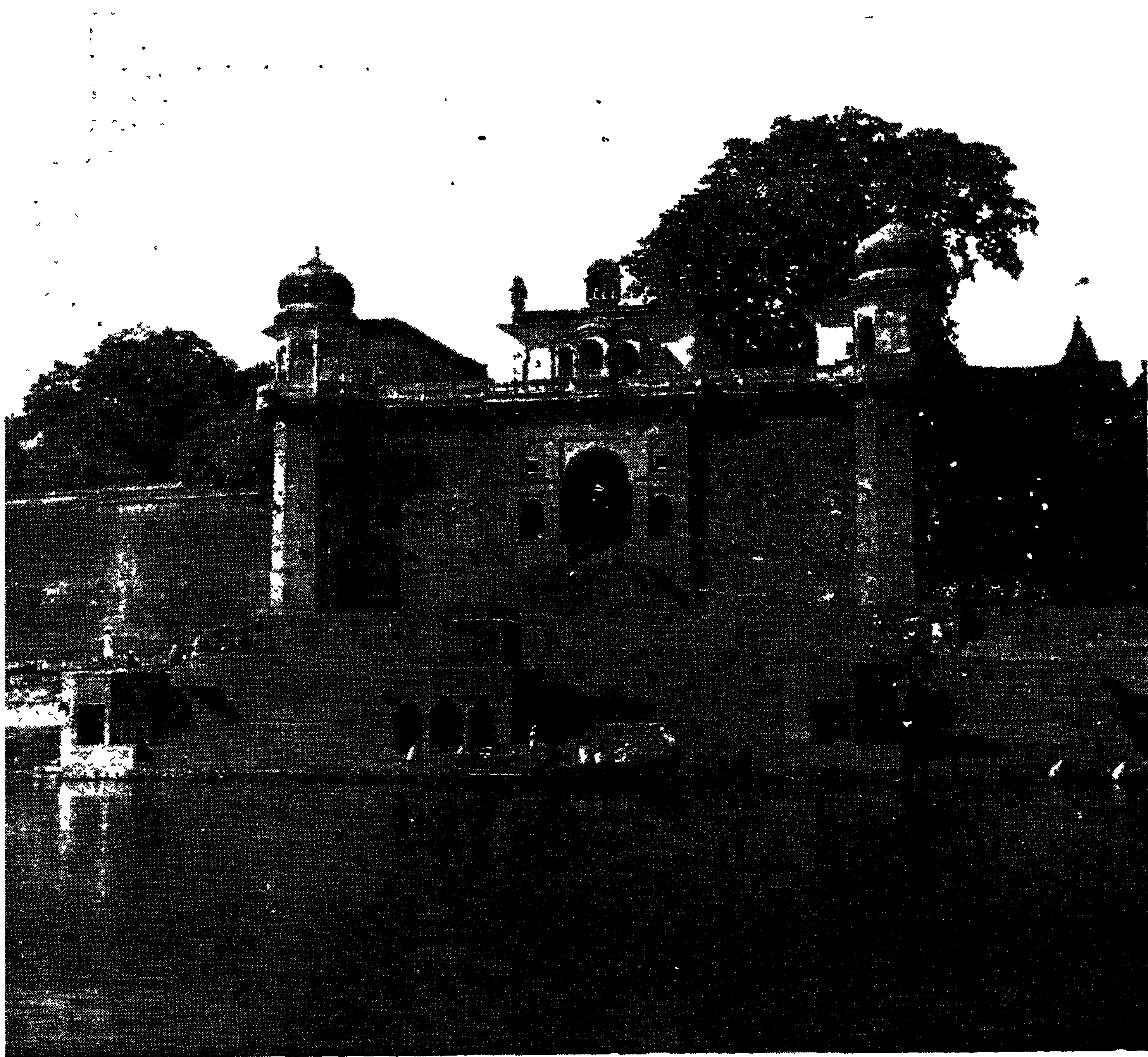


MADHAV DAS'S GARDEN AND BUNGALOW. K. S. M. & CO.

Governor-General, ere he would reach Benares. Accordingly, Cheit Singh went and encamped near Buxar, having sent his brother Sujan Singh, in advance, to inform the Governor-General of his desire to see him. Rajah Cheit Singh was introduced to the Governor-General by Mr. Markham, when he was well received and given assurances of favourable considerations. But the Rajah's presents were refused and he was ordered to proceed to Benares.

The Governor-General, on arrival in Benares, alighted at Madhav Das's Gardens with all his suite. Baboo Ousan Singh and other enemies of Cheit Singh, took the opportunity, to report false rumours about the Rajah, to the Governor-General, and in fact, planned his destruction. Cheit Singh was refused an interview with the Governor-General and in the following day, was arrested by Mr. Markham. The subsquent events

of the Rajah's men effecting his escape by a postern gate behind the strong Shivala Fort, and their ruthless massacre of the English Sepoys, and other officers in cold blood, need not be mentioned here. In fact there was a great confusion everywhere in the town, and the Governor-General, with a limited number of guards, was in a fix as to further action. The Rajah, on reaching Ramnagar, sent away, under trustworthy men, all available property, and his family to Lateefpur. It is said that, while leaving the fort, the Raja sent word to Ranee Goolab Kanwar, Maheep Narayan, and Doorbijayee

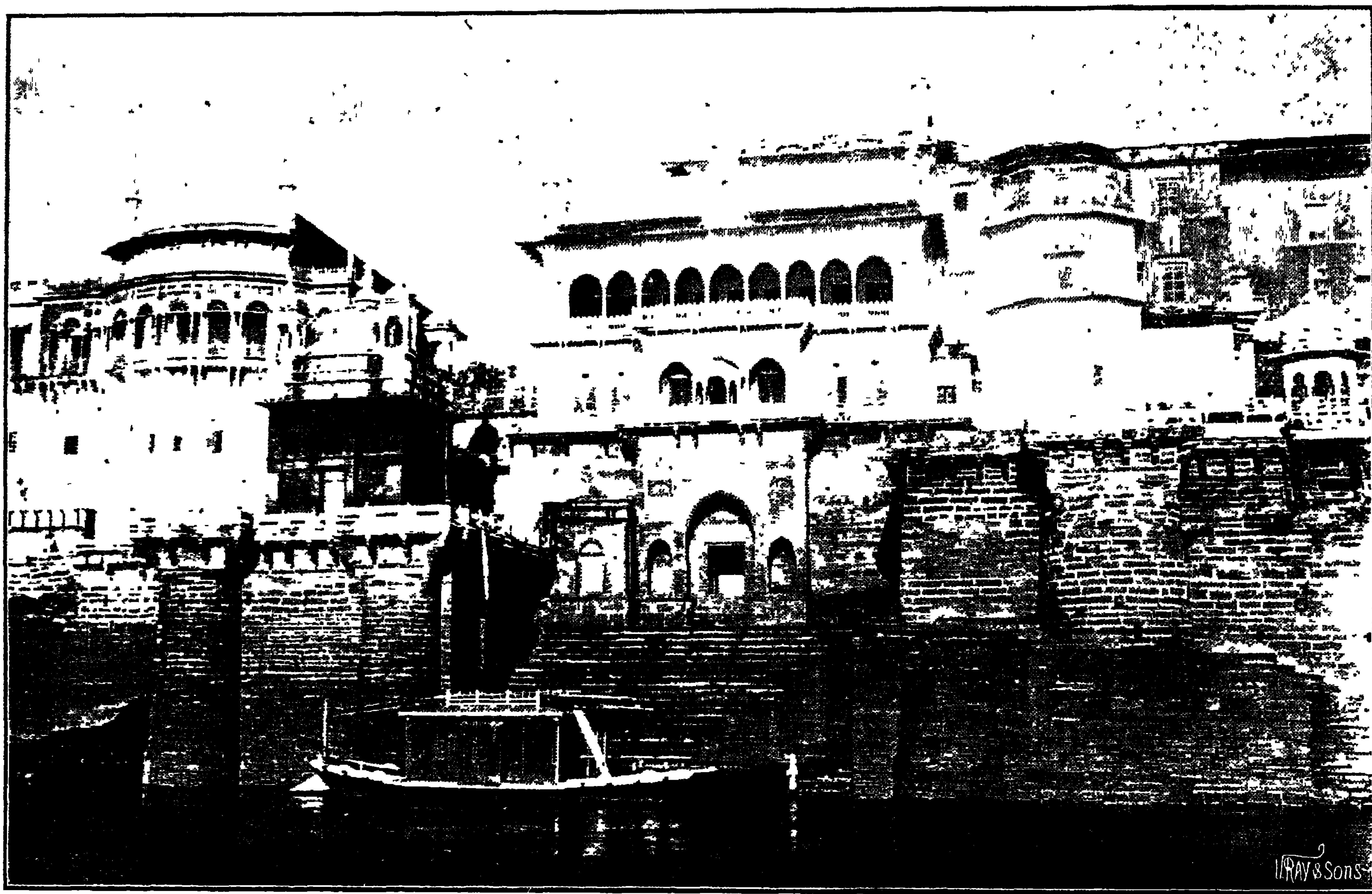


SHIVALA FORT AND GHAT. K. S. M. & CO.

Singh, to start immediately for Lateefpur. The Ranee, who, at heart was an enemy to Chiet Sing, and who, in conjunction with Ousan Singh and Ali-ood-Deen Kabira, was in favourable communication with the Governor-General, excused herself of her inability to start with him, promising yet to join him in the morning. The confused Raja, not being able to foresee any of her antagonistic intentions, believed her and went away. Subsequently, on the appeal of Ranee Gulab Kanwar with assurances of faithful allegiance to the English Government, the Governor-General, who was greatly pleased, assured her of his help, and issued purwanahs to all the Amils, stating that the Rajah

Cheit Singh had rebelled against his orders, slain the company's soldiers, and fled to the hills; that he was therefore no longer to be considered Rajah, and until another descendant of Balwant Singh could be appointed to the Goveroment, Baboo Ousan Singh would act as Naib, and his orders were to be obeyed. and revenue paid to him as heretofore; any recussent would be punished by the Company's Army".—Bulwant namah-Fredk Curwen.

When Raja Cheit Singh was safe in Lateefpur, an army under the Command of Rambuksh, Balkishon and Nazir Ashraf with 300 sowars and 5,000 footmen advanced on Ramnagar, to garrison the fort. Baboo Ousan Singh, under orders of the Governor-General was now crossing the river to take charge of the Rajah's Fort, and other pro-



RAMNAGAR FORT—THE MAHARAJAH'S PALACE. K. S. M. & CO.

perty, but when he saw the army on the Ramnagar side, guarding it, he at once returned and reported the state of affairs to the Governor-General. At once, orders were issued for all the available forces in Mirzapur and Chunar to place themselves under his immediate orders. The collected force was made into two divisions; one under Captain Bulwer, advancing on Ramnagar, from the south, and the other, under Captain Palmer and Doxon, towards the camp of Balkishoon. In the unexpected fight that ensued, followed by a hot fire of musketry from behind the walls of the Balkishon's safe encampment, great damage was done to the English Army, resulting in the death of the valiant officers and the dispersal of the of army. In the meanwhile, Captain Bulwer, was also opposed from advancing on Ramnagar, by the plucky Balkisshon and Nazzar Ashruf Khan

and after a sharp struggle for over half an hour, causing great damages on both sides, Captain Bulwer decided not to advance, having, in the meanwhile, heard of the fall of his brother officers: having been thus forced to retreat, he went away to Chunar, with all the remnants of the other defeated division.

When the Governor-General heard of this, he was greatly perplexed, but wisely decided the advisabilty of leaving Benares, at the earliest opportunity. Accordingly, by cover of night, collecting all the English gentlemen and their families, the Governor-General left Madav Das's Garden, and all of them, marched on foot, towards Chunar, while Major Popham's regiment and three other companies of sepoys with two guns, led the way, They were soon overtaken by Ousan Singh, Doorbijaya Singh, and Maheep Narayin Singh, since their position at Benares, was considered unsafe. The troubles undergone by the party during the dark night's march, through unknown country, intersected by flooded ravines, and rivers could be easily imagined than told. Luckily for them, in spite of the intentions of the rebels to overtake them on their passage to Chunar, which was only put off by unseen hands, the party arrived safely at Chunar at day-break.

The subsequent part of the rebillion which consisted chiefly in the plundering of whatever property was found in Madhav Das's Gardens, and other residences of the English and their servants, and in the capturing as prisoners of several Hindustanee spies and the slaying of Zein-ool-abdeen, Munshi Goorprasad, servant of the Resident, and others, need not be detailed here, since, after all, they only rendered Cheit Singh's case, an hopeless one. The punishments inflicted on Ali-ood-Deen Kabeera, the notorious double dealer of this sad reign, were perhaps quite deserving, as he was one of the chief tormenters of Raja Cheit Singh and one of the chief instruments of spreading bad rumours about Cheit Singh's actions. It is said, in spite of all attempts of his friends to escape, the Moulvi, " Cutting off his beard and moustaches, putting a 'Tilak' on his forehead, and a "Jenao" on his shoulder, he disguised himself as a Brahmin, and going to the house of a Brahmin, a friend of his, sat down with a book before him". Finally he was caught, rediculed, tormented, and sent in chains to Lateefpur.

In spite of all the attempts of Cheit Singh to retain his possessions, the persevering, and successful attacks of the English army, and their final occupations of the forts of Patita and Lohra Sookrit, coupled with the incapicity of his un-tutored army, so discouraged him, that, after consulting his friends in a Council, held near the Bijiagarh fort, he decided to leave his family, under guards, in Bijiagarh, and to proceed with as much of his treasures as he could carry, to the Dekkan, to secure the help of the Mahratta chiefs, for restoring him in his kingdom.

Cheit Singh took with him his brother Soojan Singh, Sudhanand Bukshee, some baboos, Golam Husan Khan, Fyzoollah Beg, 500 Sowars, 2000 footmen and four companies of sepoys, besides jewels, coins and other valuables loaded on 25 elephants, 50 camels, 1,500 bullocks, 1,000 coolies and 200 banghy-burdars.

After great hardship and loss of a good portion of his property on the way and the desertion of many of his confidants, Cheit Singh reached the dominions of Scindia, and was received by him kindly through his dewan Madhav Rao, on account of his being the Rajah of Kashi.

On the news of Cheit Singh's flight reaching the Governor-General, immediate steps were taken for the occupation of the forts of Lateefpur and Bijiagarh. The Governor-General then proceeded to Ramnagar accompanied by all the English officials and two regiments of sepoys, and thence to Benares. After due enquiries and satisfaction with the learned Pundits as to who was the legal heir, according to the Hindu religion, after the death of Rajah Balwant Singh, the Govornor-General, presented Maheep Narain with a Khillut, and raised him to the position of Rajah of Benares, with his father Doorbijaya Singh, as Naib, owing to the minority of the Rajah, and Ousan Singh as the Diwan. Ascertaining from the available records, that the total revenue collections of Cheit Singh were about 53 lakhs of rupees, and deducting thirteen lakhs for Jaghirs to Baboos, allowance to Zamindars, sibbundhee expenses &c., the Governor-General fixed the revenue from the Rajah of Benares to the Government, at forty lakhs of rupees. Private Jaghirs of the Rajah, besides, to the value of one lakh and sixty-five thousand rupees, with those of Kyro Mungror, already referred to, as the rent-free Jaghir under Emperor Alamghir, were also given to Raja Maheep Narain Singh in perpetuity.

We have already observed that Ousan Singh got a good Jaghir from Cheit Singh. It was now found that he was taking undue advantages over the officers of the State, and, was in consequence, ordered by the Governor-General, for the proper management of the country without his frequent and mischievous interference, to go to his Jaghirin Sijadpoor, which he had to obey.

Baoo Doorbijayee Singh,for his services as Naib; was given the jaghiry of Mahaich, valued Rs. 35,000. Bhugah Singh, for his co-operatioa in the operations of Captain Roberts on Ramnagar, got Rs. 11,000, Nankar from the revenue of Pergaunah Chowse; Ali Azim Khan nephew of, Fuzal Ali of Gazeepur got a grant of Rs. 12,000 a year from the revenue of Gazeepur; Adil Shah, Zamindar of Agorhee, got Rs 8000 a year from the revenue of his Zamindary; Gobindjeet,Zamindar of Kantit, got an allowance of Rs 35,000 a year from the revenues of his Zamindary. The family of the unfortunate Mir Kassim Khan, consisting of seven sons and two daughters, were lying in great distress in Kohud. At the recomendation of some sympathisers, the Governor-General very graciously sanctioned Rs. 250 a month for the eldest son, Rs. 100 a month for the other brothers and Rs. 150 a month for each of the sisters and also gave them a house in Benares, to live in. In fact, many others who saitsfied the Governor-General with the least service or claims were well received and protected. Many Brahmins, Bairaghees, and other residents of the province were also granted liberal pensions.

The next improtant work of the Governor-General while in Benares was the establishment of the Kotwalee, and other Courts of Justice, with the necessary revenue offices, to facilitate the systematic government of the four Sircars. After careful consultation with some of the most prominent citizens, he established a fully empowered Magisterial Kotwalee, with Ali Ibrahim Khan of Moorshidebad, as the first Magistrate of Benares. The Governor-General also ordered one lakh of rupees to be paid from the Company's treasury, for the Magistrate's salary and that of other establishment under him.

Another information concerning the family of Cheit Singh, left at Bijiagarh fort, deserves special mention especially in connection with the very kind and compromising

treatment accorded them by the Governor-General, in spite of his great anger towards Cheit Singh and his wicked adherents for their rebellious acts

When Colonel Popham and other officers, after great difficulty, established themselves into strong positions on adjoining hills commanding the high fort at Bijiagarh, with mounted batteries &c., and opened fire from both sides, the garrison within, not being able to defend itself, induced the Ranee to court terms of peace. Accordingly when Vakils were sent to Col. Popham, to ask for the conditions of surrender, the Colonel replied that he had orders to capture the fort, and not to make terms for its capitulation ; but, on their entreaty, forwarded the terms for peace to the Governor-General which were, however, refused. On further representation to Colonel Popham, of the Ranee's intention to commit suicide, than to live in the midst of dangers, the Governor-General, was informed of the same, who immediately sent Kantoo Baboo with a message to her that no grant of land or Jaghir could be given her, but she was to ask any thing else she desired. The Ranee requested that something for her maintenance might be granted from the property in the fort. Colonel Popham, accordingly, in consultation with Kantoo Baboo, decided to allow her fiften per cent. of the value of the coin in the place, and also sent word by her Vakeel that she might take away whatever jewels and valuables she could carry with her ; further, a guard was given her to protect her and her people from any insult or injury. The Ranee was only too glad to accept these terms, and left the fort with all her women and family. in palkees loaded with precious stones and jewellery,in fact, in many, nothing else was placed—and departed for Benares, when the Governor-General gave her the house of Nawab Saadut Ali to live in, and provided her with all she wanted. (Balwant Namah Fredk. Curwen.)

Amongst the many favours shown by the Governor-General to the family of Cheit Singh, while in Benares, may be mentioned, his sending a picture of Cheit Singh, set in gold, obtaining it from an Englishman who had purchased it recently, to pacify his children who were crying for their father; his sending daily fruits &c., for them; his placing a guard with strict orders to protect their honour. It is said that, when some Englishmen, whose property were recently plundered by Cheit Singh's men, murmured at the extraordinary favours shown by the Governor-General towards Cheit Singh's family, he pacified them saying that the person who committed the misdeeds was suffering and that his family, have not done any harm to any one, and that it would not be justifiable to expose the innocent and the helpless to insult and ruin. Finally, when the children suggested to the Governor-General their desire to join their father, he gladly permitted them to proceed, providing them with "horses for carriage, Rs. 15,000 for travelling expenses and two companies of sepoys to guard the woman as far as the boundaries of the English territory." *Fredk. Curwen.*

Finally, the Governor-General informed his Government in Calcutta. that "On his return to Benares,his first care was to determine the succession to the Raj and territory which the honourable company had a perfect right to dispose of, the reigning family not having merited, by any act of theirs, to be involved in the punishment of Chait Singh, who had been equally their enemy, and whom they regarded as a usurper of their more legal rights. I therefore, in virtue of the full powers which I possessed from the council for

that purpose, resolved to bestow the Raj on Maheep Naray in, the lineal heir of Rajah Balwant Singh.—History of the Prov. of Benares.

Now, it must be remembered, that, Rajah Maheep Narayin Singh's authority, over the dominions of his ancestors, as invested on him, by the Governor-General, on the 30th September 1781, was, in no way,other than what was enjoyed by Rajah Balwant Singh and Mansa Ram, excepting the matter of increased revenue. The supervision of the Benares Mint, and the magisterial functions over the province, were not allowed either to Mansa Ram, or to Balwant Singh, both of which having been reserved, during the Subadary of Oudh, as Royal prerogatives. The Governor-General as a matter of special favour, entrusted Cheit Singh, with these powers as well, in addition, when the province was transferred to the Company, by the Nawab Vazir, in 1775. The minority of Raja Maheep Narayin, coupled with the observance of the Imperial policy, that the control of the mint and the administration of criminal justice, must be reserved by the Imperial Government, consonant with the subordinate and dependant position of a feudatory vassal of the Empire, suggested to the keen perception of the Governor-General, the adaptability of such policy. Rajah Maheep Narain was therefore vested with the same powers as enjoyed by Mansa Ram, Balwant Singh and even Cheit Singh, when under the Nizam of Oudh.

Further. in the establishment of a special magistrate for the City of Benares, great care was taken to define his authority, so that the collection of revenue and customs of the town were clearly reserved to the Rajah, since otherwise, it might affect the Rajah's influence in the collection of his revenues, in the rest of his province. At the same time, a few other cesses previously collected by the Rajah of Benares, from visitors, were also removed; but, by way of compensating for the loss sustained by the Rajah in the removal of his supervision of the mint, of the criminal jurisdiction and of various obnoxious local taxes, an allowance of Rs. 49,500 was sanctioned to be deducted out of the Rajah's annual revenue to the Government.

In the meantime, reports of the mismanagemant of affairs by Naib Doorbijaya Singh, reached the ears of the Governor-General, and he was therefore removed, appointing Jugger Dec Sing to the post. It was soon found that the Government of the Province, even under the new Naib, did not fare better; it was therefore decided that the Governor-General must proceed, in person, once more, to Benares, and make necessary arrangement. Accordingly, the Governor-General. went to Benares and when he found affairs in a very unsatisfactory manner especially owing to the minority of the Raja, he proposed a new constitution by which, in conjunction with the Naib, and the Resident, a better Government might be assured.

The New Naib, Ajaib Singh, brother of the Ranee Goolab Kumar, as deputy of the Rajah, was entrusted with the management and administration of the Province subject to the approval and consent of the Rajah.

The Naib was assisted by Ali Ibrahim Khan, Ameen or Inspector, in the revenue settlement and in the appointment and supervision of the 'amils' in the

province, settling disputes or differences, jointly, the final decision being left to the Naib only.

The Resident, Mr. Foulke, received the Imperial revenue from the Raja or his Naib, granting receipts; he was also to supply, on emergencies, and on application, of the Raja or his Naib, parties of sepoys, from the regiments at Chunar or Buxar.

The Resident and the Ameen held their offices, in the Rajah's 'Kutchery' or office of treasury, and seperate copy or copies of the accounts of the daily receipts and disbursements were maintained.

The balance over and above the stipulated Imperial kists were at the disposal of the Rajah. The new constitution, as proposed by the Governor-General and approved by the Council, was merely of a temporary character, as will be evident from the following extracts. "In truth," wrote the Governor-General, to the Council on the 13th June 1784, "I do not propose this as a permanent arrangement. I will be answerable for it as a temporary expedient. I hope that neither this, nor any subsequent administration will think of committing the interior detail to the control of a British subject. To establish English Collectors in the Province would be to subvert the rights of the family. The intended Naib is the choice of the Raja and of the old Ranee; and, in a charge of such a kind, I presume you will allow them the right of choice, for if the Rajah himself was capable of the management we could not, with any show of justice, transfer it to any one from him."

This arrangement lasted till the arrival of Lord Cornwallis in 1786, but, in the meanwhile, the Raja has had several reasons for complaining against the arbitrary proceedings of the then Resident When, on the arrival of Lord Cornwallis, he was informed by the Rajah's Vakeel, of the irregularities in the Government of Benares, he visited Benares in September of 1788, and found the state of affairs very unsatisfactory. So, with the consent of the council, he removed the then Resident, replacing him by Mr. Jonathan Duncan, then the secretary of the Revenue Department in Bengal, a gentlemen of establihed integrity and ability. The restoration of legitimate duties to the Rajah and the display of extraordinary capacity by the Rajah to look after the affairs of his state, even without the assistance of a Naib, coupled with the disinterested and capable co-operation of the new Resident Mr. Duncan, enabled the Governor-General to speak in high terms about the Resident and the Rajah, to the Court of Directors.

At this stage, the Governor-General directed the Resident to explain to the Raja the most beneficial system of the British administration as introduced in Bengal, and to recommend its introduction in the Rajah's province, as well, with a view to reap similar good results.

But the difficulty of proposing to the Rajah, such a change in the administration of his province, which would necessarily deprive him of his Regal rights, and the natural delay caused thereby, were such that nothing definite could be known when Lord Cornwallis went to England in 1793.

The same policy being pursued by Sir John Shore, his immediate successor, "the resident was directed," on the 3rd March 1794, "to ascertain the state of the Rajah's mind and disposition towards a concurrence in the projected alteration of system for the province, and to use his best endeavours to convince the Rajah of the benefit that the introduction of the Governor-General in Council's plan of administration is calculated to secure to the country."

No satisfactory reply was forth-coming from the Raja, until sometime in July 1794, when the Resident was able to report to his Government, of the consent of the Raja, for the proposed change in the administration. The few conditions of the Raja were accepted by the President-in-council, and, according to that body's resolutions the following agreement was drawn up and duly executed on the 27th October 1794:—

"Translation of an Agreement entered into between the Rajah of Benares on the one part, and the Resident at his Highness's court, on the part of the British Government, on the other."

"The Governor-General being at this time desirous to introduce, *with the consent of* Rajah Maheepnarayan, the Zamindar, into the Zillah of Benares, for the advantage thereof, the same system and rules for the administration of Justice, and for the concerns of revenue, as was in 1793 established within the provinces of Bengal, Behar, and Orissa, during the Government of the Marquis Cornwallis, and the said Rajah having, after consideration of the said circumstances, *agreed to and approved thereof*, so as that from the beginning of 1202 Fusily, the administration of Justice, which has hitherto remained in the hands of natives, shall be conducted by English gentlemen, and that there shall also be separately appointed a Collector (being in like manner a British subject) for the realisation of the revenue, whilst the duties of the Court of Appeal are to be conducted under similar regulations as are provided to that effect in Bengal; and for as much as the support of all these estublishments will occasion to the Honourable Company's Government an increase of expense, at the same time, under the operation of the permanent settlement concluded in 1197, the resources from the district bears also, under the favour of the Almighty, a prospect of increase, therefore, with a view to provide for the said changes, which are *solely to be incurred for the prosperity* and advantage of the four Sircars composing the Zillah of Benares, the following articles have, with the privity of the Governor-General in Council, been settled and concluded between the said Rajah and Mr. Duncan, *to be observed and followed in time to come*, from the introduction of the new establishment of it.

1st. Out of the surplus revenue, over and above the forty lakhs of rupees which *including the articles of deduction*, were stipulated to be payable by Rajah Mahipnarayan, according to the estimrary pottah which he received from the Moolky treasury by Rajah Mahipnarayan, exclusive of the Jaghires and altamgahs that are now in his possession, and the remaining surplus is to be annually expended in this district, and applied, under the authority of the Company's Government, towards the charge of the Civil and Judicial establishments, in the support of the new and old courts, and for the maintenance of the Padsala, or Hindu College, and for repairing the roads and constructing bridges, and promoting the cultivation, &c.

" (2nd.) The revenue settlement made of the land within the Raj of Benares, &c., having taken place with the privity and approbation of Rajah Maheep Narayan Singh Bahadoor, the pottahs, receipts, and farigh-khutties, or acquittances thereof, and passed under the seal and signature of the said Rajah to the aumils, Zemindars, and farmers, and the dufter in office, and Khazanchi, or treasurer of the said Rajah, having always remained for the carrying on of the country (*i e.* revenue) business, the said signature, seal, office, and treasurer, are to remain in force, and be continued as usual."

" (3rd.) In case of complaints relative to revenue causes or charity ground, &c., being prefered to the Hoozoor (*i e*, the English Government), by any parties residing within the jaghire, and altamgah, &c., the personal and private lands of Rajah Mahip Narayan Singh, the inquiries shall be made in like manner as such cases were amicably conducted between Mr. Duncan and the Rajah—that is, since the gentlemen holding the station of Collector will have more concern and connection with such matters than the other gentlemen, the rule shall be that, with the privity and ascertainment of the said collector (who is to have regard to the honor and dignity of the said Rajah,) such causes are to be settled through the channel of the said Rajah, or of the officers of the said Rajah's cutchery; it being at the same time understood and provided, that as it is a duty incumbent on the Honourable Company's Government, to distribute and ensure the attainment of Justice to all the inhabitants of Benares, should it so happen that, after referring such complaints to the Rajah, or to his officers in the cutchery, the contentment of the parties complaining and aggrieved shall not be obtained, the Rajah shall, relative to the adjustment of such causes, listen to and approve of the suggestion and advice of the collector, in like manner as hath been practised in the time of Mr. Duncan; and it is also incumbent on the said collector, in all proper and just causes, to show the utmost attention possible to the Rajah's accomodation, and to hold in view the maintenance of his honour and dignity, such being entirely consistent with the wishes of Government; *and if (which God forbid) any such subject should arise as cannot be settled between the said Collector and the Rajah aforesaid, the decision on such cases shall depend on the Governor-General in Council.*"

" Wherefore this akrurnamah hath, with the privity and approbation of the Governor-General in Council, been written and concluded between Rajah Mahip Narayan Singh Bahadur, the Zamindar of the Zillah of Benares, &c.. and Mr. Duncan, who is at present in the station of Resident at Benares, *on the part of the Government of the English East India Company.*"

Dated the 27th October 1794.

It may be remarked, in connection with the above treaty, that the Government of Sir John Shore never thought of introducing the new system of British Government into some portion of the Rajah's territories, without previously obtaining his permission for so doing, thereby exhibiting the nature of relationship to be that between a supreme power and a feudatory dependent prince, as established by the former treaties of 1775 and 1781.

The year 1794 is therefore important in the history of the Province of Benares, as the remarkable date from which, the British nation, as an administrative body, had the

first and immediate control over its affairs. Prior to this, the collection of revenue was not on any approved scale, it being the only principle to exact as much as may be necessary or available, from the ryots and Zamindars of the Province. Though Rajah Balwant Singh conducted it better, by assessing a lump sum on his province, the successive administrations, following a rather different proceedure, allowed affairs to get into great confusion besides corruption, in the Revenue department, the subordinate officers therein not having proper supervision The Imperial Government did not interfere with the internal Revenue administration either during the time of Raja Cheit Singh, or during the early years of Raja Mahip Narayan. In fact, till the arrival of Lord Cornwallis as Governor-General, and till the appointment by him of Mr. Jonathan Duncan, as Resident in Benares, its affairs were un-cared for.

During the first year, the Raja was allowed to manage his own affairs under the supervision of Mr. Duncan. The next and important item of his time was the effecting of a permanent settlement of the province, being for 4 or 5 years in certain provinces, and for about 10 years in others. "The real import of the settlement, therefore, was that a regular demand determined by the Resident and his agents was substituted for the unchecked system of extortion that had hitherto prevailed."—Dist. Gazet. Vol. xxvi.

Following the suggestions of the Government, Mr. Duncan had succeeded, by the time of the drawing up of the agreement of 1794, in obtaining the Rajah's permission for a permanent settlement of the Province, to the great comfort and happiness of the people.

When affairs of the Province were thus being improved, under the new administration of the British, Rajah Mahip Narayan died in the year 1795, leaving his Raj to his son and successor, Raja Oodit Narayan Singh, who was duly acknowledged by the Government. Owing to his minority, his affairs were under the management of a Dewan, until the Rajah took charge of his affairs in the year 1799.

About this time, the Nawab Vazir, Asaf-ool-Dowlah died, and the resident at Lucknow appointed Wazir Ali, as his son and successor. But, on subsequent enquiries, learning that his claims were not legitimate, an elder brother of the late Nawab, Mirza Saadut-Ali-Khan was lifted to the Gaddhi.

The subsequent arrival of Wazir Ali to Benares, his living in the Madhav Das's Gardens enjoying a liberal pension from the British, his subsequent rebellion and assassination of Mr. Cherry, the Collector, and other officers; his preparations for war, and final defeat near Gorakpur, and his final flight to Rajputna. and refuge under the Raja of Jaipur, his imprisonment, having been surrendered by the Raja, his being removed to Calcutta and from thence to Vellore, where he died—all these facts need not be detailed here.

During the long life of the Raja Oodit Narayan Singh, the only important event, that might be mentioned, is his frequent application to the Imperial Government, not to introduce the English method of Administration into his own Family Domains, and to let it continue, as excepted by the agreement of 1794. But the successive Governments, who



MAHARAJAH MANSA RAM.
1730—1738.



MAHARAJAH BALWANT SINGH.
1738—1770.



MAHARAJAH CHEIT SINGH.
1770—1781.



MAHARAJAH MAHIP NARAYAN SINGH.
1781—1795.



MAHARAJAH ISHWARI PRASAD NARAYAN SINGH.
1835—1890.



MAHARAJAH ODITA NARAYAN SINGH.
1795—1835.

viewed the matter otherwise and in the interests of the people, did introduce into the domains a system of survey and settlement under the Rajah's supervision, as was deemed fit under the existing circumstances.

Rajah Oodit Narayan Singh was succeeded by his nephew, Rajah Isree Narayan Singh, in March 1835. It is said that, when Lord Ellenborough cancelled the office of the Superintendent, appointed since the regulations of 1828, and when the Rajah had a chance, he exhibited sufficient skill and ability in the management of his own affairs, that Sir D Macleod in his communication to the Commissioner of Benares, on the 20th May 1849, said " that the Raja set himself to his work with the most coumendable assiduity, and with a sincere desire to promote the well-being of his people, to conduct the business of his territory, visiting different parts from time to time, and erecting in one of his outlying districts a country mansion, where His Highness could reside for a portion of each year, and so be more accessible to his subjects."

Since the occupation of Upper India by the British, there have occurred three rebellions of a more or less serious nature The first one was that of Cheit Singh, the second was that of Wazir Ali, both of which have already been dealt with at some length. Now, we shall give a brief account of the third one, which was of a rather more serious nature than the two preceeding ones, only with reference to Benares. This rebellion or rather the great Sepoy Mutiny, as it is generally known, while it threatened the estabished British Supremacy in the country. in its infancy, did not pass without shaking the peace of ancient Benares to some extent. Meerut and Delhi were in open arms, and hordes of rebels were marching then from Barrackpore to the North-Western Provinces. Things were not pleasant at Cawnpore, Allahabad and Lucknow. Benares was also on the verge of rebellion, as the citizens were showing signs of disaffection and covert ways of venting their displeasure towards the authorities on account of dearness of food-grains which were then prevailing in the city.

Warned by the wholesale butcheries of Meerut and Delhi, the Civil and Military authorities of Benares saw clearly the dangers which beset them. Mr. Frederick Gubbins, who sometimes before, as Magistrate, had acquired by assiduous display of energy, an immense ascendancy over the minds of the people, was, when the outbreak was threatening, the Judge of Benares Mr. Henry Carr Tucker was then the Commissioner. The critical position of Benares at this anxious hour may be better seen by perusal of the following encouraging communication from Lord Canning, the Governor General to Mr. Tucker the Commisioner—" Although it represents a most critical state of things at Benares, it satisfies me that the crisis is met with calm courage based upon that which alone is the foundation of true courage and that events as they rise, will be dealt with temporarily, firmly and with sound judgement. You have indeed a precious stake upon the issue. I sympathise deeply with your family. If they need to be assured of it, I beg you to tell them, that not an hour has been or will be lost in sending aid to Benares, and wherever else it may be most urgently required. Come what may, do not face any aspersion or misrepresentations. No one shall be ignorant how nobly the authority of our Government, and the honor and dignity of Englishman has been upheld at Benares. Writing later on to Mr. Gubbins, Lord Canning says,

" If I had more leisure for writing letters, I should not have left you so long without a word of thanks for your admirable and most judicious exertions. I know from Mr. Tucker's letters and messages, and also from other quarters, how much is due to you and to Mr. Lind, and I beg you both to believe that I am most grateful for it. You have all had a difficult game to play, if ever there was one and your success has been hitherto complete. I pray that you may carry it through. You have done really good service in the bazaars in obtaining a reduction of the price of grain."

It must be mentioned to the great credit of the late Maharajah that he readily placed all his available resources at the disposal of the Government, on this trying occasion. His meritorious actions were appreciated by the Government, who thanked him for his fidelity, and allegiance and honoured him for his meritorious services by raising him to the dignity of Maharajah.

When upon restoratoin of order, Lord Canning visited Benares, he was very respectfully welcomed with a thanks-giving address, wherein the Maharajah expressed his continuing fealty to the Government.

During His Excellency's stay in Benares, the Maharajah paid him several visits, and at the latter's request, His Highness was authorised to adopt an heir and successor to the Raj; as being clearly entitled to enjoy the same privilege in this respect as the other chiefs and princes of Hindustan."

The further history of the Kings of Benares, coming naturally under a new period, after the assumption of Supreme Power in India directly by the British Government, will be dealt with, later on.

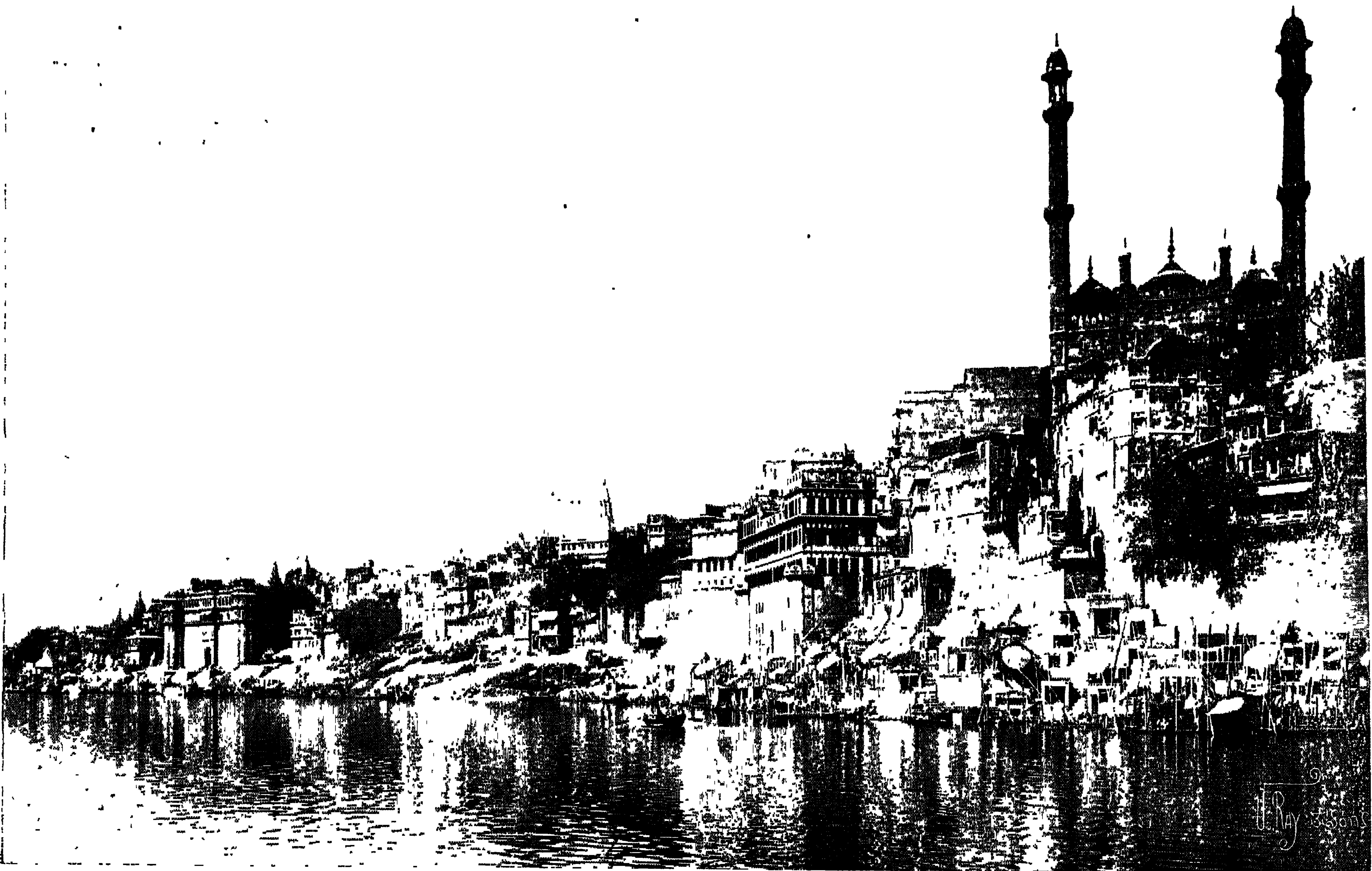


PART II.



Calcutta Thacker Spink & Co

SMILING BENARES.



BENARES-RIVER FRONT.



KASHI STATION. K S M. & Co

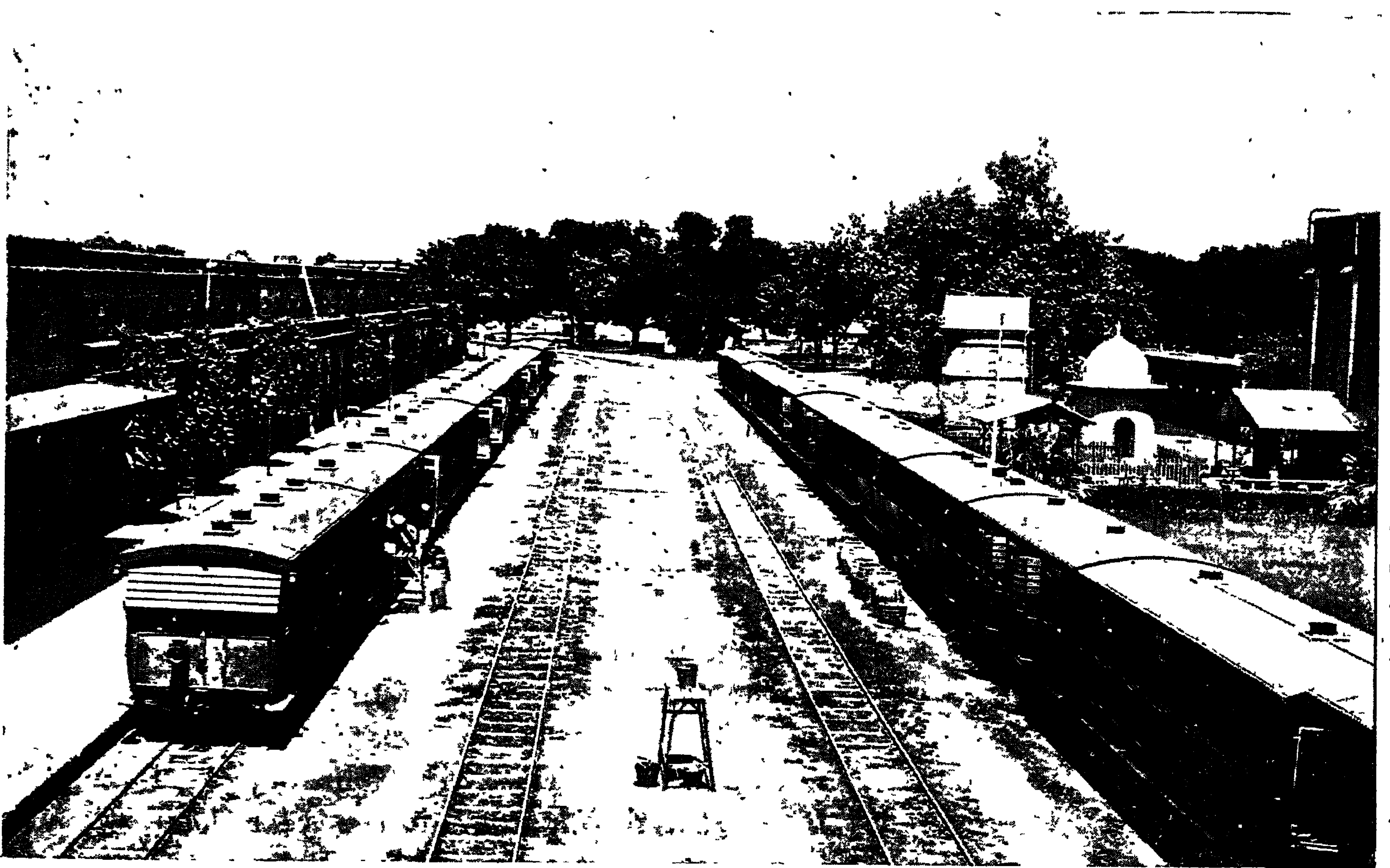
SMILING BENARES.

The ever-resplendent Kâshi, in spite of the ravishes of successive centuries, since its first colonization by the Vedic Aryans, has stood firm in the adamantine Kankar cliff-bank of the charming Ganga, ever delighting the eye, with its thousands of temples, hundreds of mosques and numberless towers and minarets. Liberated from the trammels of her past entanglements in the early days of British occupation, she had been enjoying its wholesome administration for the last half century to great advantage. We may mention here that, no other Indian City needed the careful administration of justice and protection of life and property as Benares did on the eve of the British occupation. As the chief and central seat of the Hindu religion, where thousands of devotees and pilgrims of all ranks and position from the various provinces of India were pouring in, day after day, a well supervised and systematic form of Government and protection of life and property, was found to be the most important. With this noble object in view, the wise Warren Hastings, separated the magisterial functions, in the year 1781, when he installed the young Rajah Maheep Narayan in the Gadhi of Rajah Balwant Singh. Mr, Ali Ibrahim Khan was the first independent Magistrate of Benares, holding his authority directly from the Supreme Government. Since that memorable date,the city has gradually improved to its present enviable state with all the latest improvements necessary for the general welfare of the thousands of its permanant and floating population.

While its venerable old site continued for centuries, un-altered, various changes, yet, crept in from time to time, giving the city as many garbs as the favourable or other circumstances exercised their influence over it. Successive changes of Government from about the begining of the 12th century, worked as many alterations in the general appearance and character of this city. Final peace and happiness having been assured after the earlier troublous days of the English in India, many Indian Chiefs and philanthrophic gentleman and ladies from all corners of the peninsula, vied one with the other to embelish, once more, their Holy Kâshi, as far as possible, to its original splendour.

New palatial structures for public or private functions, commodious and strong bathing ghats, restored old and sanctified temples, improved modes of communication, extensive recreation grounds, broadened highways, with perfect safety to life and property, have all been brought into existence, since the memorable year 1794, to the great comfort and happiness of its vast congregation of citizens and equally numerous visitors.

The exquisitely captivating scenery that entwines the appreciation and curiosity of every visitor to this Holiest of the Holy cities of Hindustan, as seen from the opposite bank or from anywhere in the river from the Ramnagar Fort to the Dufferin Bridge, is the unique and conquering attraction of Benares. It presents to the visitor the grandeur of a fairy land, of massive palaces, turrets, towers and minarets, with the magnificent Ganges flowing by majestically.



BENARES-CANTONMENT STATION K. S. M. & CO

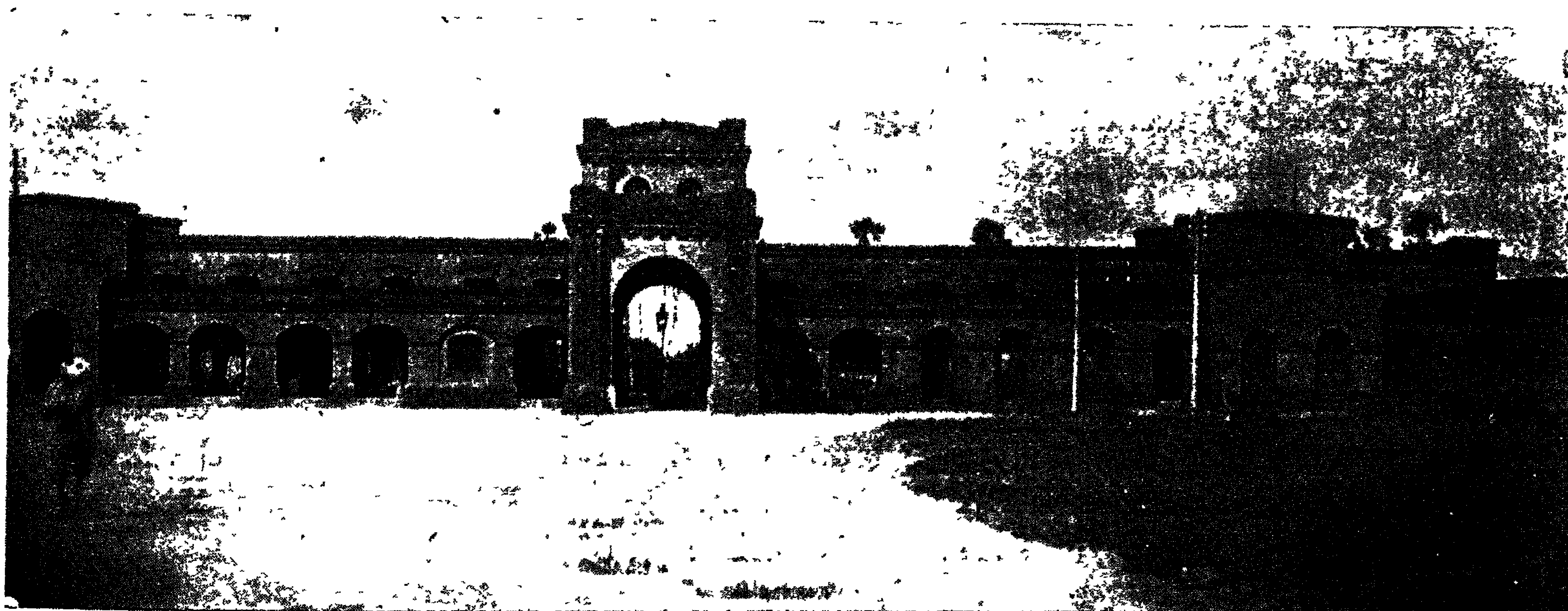
Benares is the capital of the district and division of the same name, under the modern historical period as it was of the kingdom of the Kashis, in the earlier days. It lies majestically on the left bank of the Ganges at a distance of about 435 miles by rail from Calcutta, 941 miles from Bombay and 1,467 miles from Madras (*via* Calcutta)—" It is approached not only by the Ganges, which is navigable by vessels of considerable size, but also by several lines of railway and by numerous roads. Over the great Dufferin Bridge, which connects the eastern extremity of the city with the opposite bank of the river, runs the main line of the ' Oudh and Rohilkhand Railway ' from, Moghal Sarai to Lucknow and Sheranpur, passenger trains of the ' East Indian Railway, ' also having running powers over the section between Moghal Serai and Cantoment Station. This line

traverses the northern out-skirts of the city, with a station close to the bridge-head known as Kâshi, (Page 72) and another in the cantonment to the north-west. The latter is an



BENARES—CANTONMENT STATION. (EXTERIOR VIEW.)

important Junction, as here the main line is joined by the loop line running to Jaunpur, Fyzabad and Lucknow, and also by the metre gauge system of the 'Bengal and North-Western Railway.' This narrow gauge track runs east-wards from cantonment to a third station known as Benares city, and thence turning to the north-east, passes under the 'Oudh and Rohilkhand' line and after crossing the Barna continues in the same direction towards Ghazeepur and Gorackpur. Of the road approaches the chief is the grand trunk road which utilises the Dufferin bridge for the passage of the Ganges, closely follows the line of 'Oudh and Rohilkhand Railway' and leaves Benares on the southern borders of



BENARES—CITY STATION.

the cantonments. From the civil station on the north, metalled roads lead to Jaunpur, Azamgarh and Gazeepur and unmetalled roads go to Snidhora, Niar Dih, Balva, and

elsewhere. From the southern end of the bridge a metalled road leads to Ramnagar and thence to Mirzapur, while from the southern extremity of the city, a second metalled road goes to the ferry opposite Ramnagar and unmetalled tracks go to Lohta and Bhadohi to Chunar. In adtion to these, mention must be made of the celebrated Panch-Kosi Road, which is said to mark the circuit of the ancient Benares, and is regularly traversed as an act of pilgrimage by visitors to the holy city. The space enclosed by the road is popularly considered as sacred as Benares itself and it is noteworthy that all the shrines along its course are on the Benares side of the route. The road which is altoghter about fifty miles in length and is divided into five stages. begins at the Manikarnika Ghat and leads south-west to Khandwa on the Chunar road, thence to the temple of Bhimchandi Devi to the south of Rajah Talao; thence northwards through Chaukhandi to Rameswar on the Barna, which is crossed by an iron bridge; thence eastwards to the Pancha Pandava tank at Sheopur; thence to the Kapildhara tank and temple at Kotwa, near the Junction of the Barna and the Ganges; and thence back to the starting place."

"The earliest attempt at an enumeration of the inhabitants of Benares was that made in 1826, by Mr. Prinsep, who estimated the total at 183,491. The results of the 1847 census are not known, but in 1853 the population of the city, civil station and cantonments numbered 185,984. This was considered to be an exaggeration, and at all events the figure had dropped by 1865 to 173,352. Since that time there has been a rapid increase. In 1872 the aggregate was 175,188; in 1881 it had risen to 214,758 and in 1891 to 219,647. The succeeding decade witnessed a decline, as was also the case in the rest of the district: the numbor of inhabitants in 1901 was 209,331, of whom 108,813 were males and 100,518 females. The population was incloded in an area of 6,162 acres giving an average density of 21,742 to the square mile, this figure being exceeded only in Cawnpore and Meerut. The city is still second in point of size in the United Provinces, but it is being rapidly overtaken by Cawnpore. Classified by religions there were 151,488 Hindus, 51,667, Mussalmans, 646 Christians, 343 Jains, 111 Aryas, 108 Sikhs, five Parsis, and five Buddhists. As is only to be expected, Brahmins are the predominent Hindu Caste, numbering 29,398, persons. Next come Ahirs 13,734; Banias, 11,355; Koeris 8,020; chamars, 6,687; Kalwars, 6,453; Kayasths, 6,123; Telis, 5,557; Kurmis, 5,439; Lohars, 4,925; and Rajputs, 4,856. Besides these large numbers of Kahars, Khattris, Sonars, Barais, Nais, Kumbars, and Binds were enumerated, the total exceeding 2,000 in each instance. The bulk of the Mnsalmans are either Julahas, 17,781, or Sheikhs, 17,716; these are followed by Pathans, 6,056, and Saiyids, 2,178, no other caste having 2,000 representatives. These figures of religions and castes are for the Municipality alone. The cantonment population numbered 4,958 souls, of whom 2,333 were Hindus, 1,899 Musalmans, and 726, chiefly christians, of other religions."

"For pubic and municipal purposes the city is divided into seven circles or wards, known as Bhelupura Dasâswamêdh, Chauk, Chetgang, Kotwali, Jaitpura and Adampura. To these Sikraual adds an eighth and the cantonments may be treated as the ninth."

" The census returns show the inhabitants as divided into eight classes, according to occupations. No less than 44·7 per cent were engaged in the preparation and supply of material substances and then came unskilled and general labour with 16·7 per cent, followed by commerce, transport, and storage with 8·5 per cent. The various professional classes made up 8·4, domestic service accounted for 8 per cent, and agriculture for 5·5 per cent. The same proportion came under the headings of those independent of any occupation, while the remaining 2·7 per cent, comprised those employed in Government and local services. It thus appears that the city is to a very large extent industrial. * * * * * *; the special products of Benares are the silken fabrics and embroideries, work in brass and other metals, and the wooden painted and lacqered toys." (District Gazeteer of the United Provinces Vol. XXVI.)

The city, with its excellent position on the Ganges, and its extraordinary influence over the people, chiefs, zamindhars, Rajahs, and Maharajahs, from the various parts of the vast country, always, presents a very charming scenery of a cosmopolitan nature, pleasing the minds of citizen and visitor in an equally agreeable manner. It has always been, and may continue for ever, the central platform, wherefrom, not only religious, but also social, and political ideas of universal interest had emanated. It was as such a centre, perhaps, it was first colonized by the Vedic Aryans, and continued till the advent of Buddha, who preached a reformed religion, which afterwards turned out to be Buddhism ; it was therefrom, all the subsequent religious reformers had spread their beneficial tenets ; it has been honoured by a race of warlike earlier Kings, though with a break, in the interval, only to be kept up by another race of no less respectable origin, being the present Royal Family of Benares.

One should get to the top of one of the high minarets adorning the noted Aurangazeb's mosque, to get an idea of the real grandeur of this ancient city. The domes of a thousand temples, the minarets of over three hundred mosques and the lofty several storied palaces confusedly heaped together, along the bank of the Ganges, lie in thick layer just below his eyes, while at the distance, he finds occasional towers and turrets peeping out of thickly laid groves, broader roads wending their long ways through the length and breadth of this attractive city. Further to the north-west of the grand City. away in the far-off fields, beyond the winding Barna, he would find a black massive tower or Stûpa, which represents the huge remains of Saranath, the reputed resort of Buddha and his followers. Facing towards the river, he would see at a distance on the opposite bank the massive walls of the Ramnagar Fort with its turrets and palaces, and the magnificent Ganges flowing right below its fort-walls; and away in the midst of dark trees on the opposite bank may he seen the towering dome of the grand " *Sumeru Mandhir* " started by Chet Singh and finished by the late Maharajah of Benares. The silvery waters of the *Uttaravahini* Ganga rushing abrutptly towards the stony ghats on the Assi-side of Kâshi, flows afterwards in a north-easterly direction, forming a crescent bank decked with magnificent ghats and palaces, as far as the Dufferin Bridge, where from it continues in an easterly direction for some distance past the confluence of the Barna.



MANIKARNIKA GHAT—THE MOST SACRED OF THE PANCHA THIRTHAS.

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CHAPTER II.

THE GHÂTS—MANIKARNIKA TO BARNA SANGAM.

The Hindu who visits Kâshi or Benares on a pilgrimage, is first led to the Manikarnika Chakra-Pushkarani, the most ancient and sanctified *Mukti-kshêtra*, where he performs a *Sankalpa-purvak Snana*. This Kshetra is the most prominent one in Kashi. To the Hindu world, no other site is more sacred than this, in all Hindustan. It is stated in the Kâshi Khanda, that Maha Vishnu brought this famous Thîrtha into existence by the use of his Chakrâyudha, and called it 'Chakra-Pushkarani' (a tank dug by a chakra, or *discus* of Vishnu); and by its side, he was engaged in deep meditation or *thapas*; when Mahadeva or Rudra, presented himself, highly pleased before his friend, and during the interesting conversation between the two, an ear-ring (Mani-Karnika) fell off from an ear of Mahadeva into the adjoining Pushkarani of Vishnu, giving occasion thereby to call the *Thirtha*, as Mani-Karnika. It is also related that it was also agreed between Mahadeva and Maha Vishnu, that the same Kshetra must be, to the universe, a ' Mukti-Kshetra.'

We may mention here that this place was perhaps the very first spot of all importance, since time immemorial, at least since the first settlement of Kashi, by the early Vedic Aryans, when the simple worship of the elements were predominent.

The fact of this important site being almost in the centre of the rough semi-circle or crescent formed by the Ganges, The Assi, and the Barna, and the Pancha Kosi Road, coupled with the great antiquity claimed, with not insufficient reasons, for the Manikarnika and the Pancha Kosi Road, as forming the original and unchanged Kâshi, confirm our convictions, expressed elsewhere, while fixing the sanctity, antiquity and identity of site of Kashi or Benares. (Vârânasi.)

The importance of Manikarnika, as sanctified by observances of centuries need not be doubted, since it is an established fact. Whoever visits this "*Pûrna Subâkarni*," may be blessed with complete felicity in this life and an emancipation for ever. The Pushkarani (a miniature tank) is about thirty five feet square. The water level is reached by four flights of stone steps, the last seven sets of steps being of the rocky material underneath. In a niche on the northern side of the stairs, is a Moorthy of Maha Vishnu. In front of the Manikarnika and between it and the famous Ghat on the Ganges side, is the temple of Tarkeshwar, another appellation of Mahâdêva. This Mahâdêva is worshipped in connection with obtaining emancipation from future misery. This temple is out of repairs, having suffered from the current of the Ganges, rather seriously.

Just above the Mani Karnika, is the "Charan Paduka," being Maha Vishnu's foot-prints on a marble slab, fixed in the raised pavement. Its sanctity lies in the fact of its identification with the spot on which Maha Vishnu performed his *Thapas*, ere meeting Mahadeva. The *elite* of the city cremate the bodies of the dead in this spot with the permission of the City Magistrate.

The Temple of *Sidha Vinâyaka* is just above this ghat. On either side of the *Vinâyaka Moorthy*, inside the shrine, which is supposed to be very ancient, though apparently modern, there stand two statues of *Deva Paricharinees* in a very graceful attitude. This Vinâyaka is decked with a silver *kavacha* and three eyes, and is always crowded with numerous worshippers.

Adjoining this, there is another very elaborately erected temple ol the Raja of Ahmety, adding greatly to the beauty of the locality and the neighbourhood.



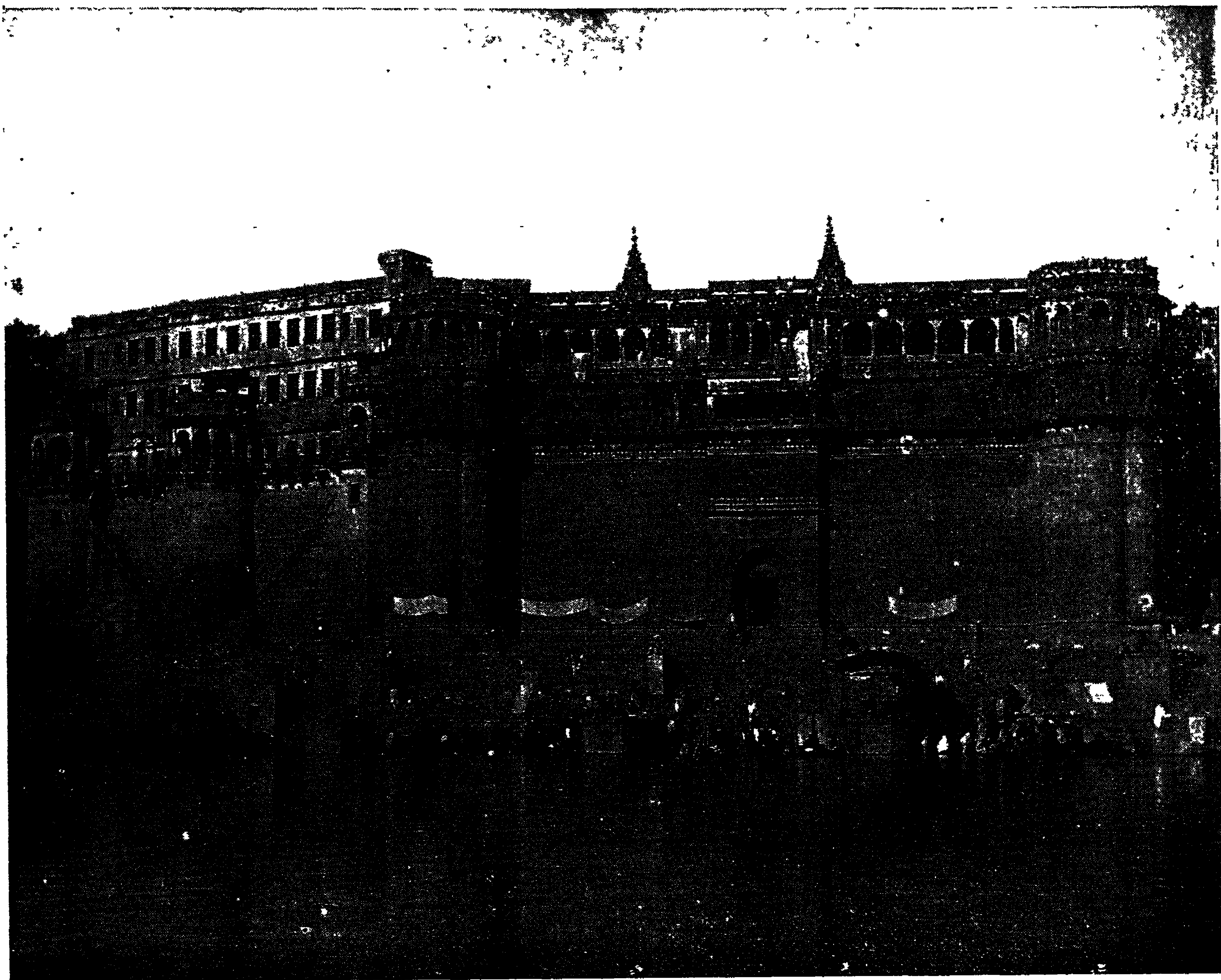
JALSAI (BURNING) GHAT, SOUTH OF MANIKARNIKA.

In the Chowk ward, towards the river, the first important place is 'Umraogir Bauli, being a large well built by a Goshaeen of the same name.

The next Ghat is popularly known as Jalsai Ghat. It is the burning ground of the Hindus, now being kept under Municipal management. There is a really extraordinary sight one could always find at this most important spot. As a burning Ghat, black with the smoke of funeral pyres, and several hillocks of logs of wood, at the back ground, and white ashes in separate heaps with one or two embers still glowing, with the relatives

and friends of the cremated person seated in mournful groups here and there, corpses laid out with their feet touching or immersed in the Ganges, tied on their rough bamboo biers, and numberless burning pyres,—this is a real study for a keen observer.

It must be mentioned that this ghat is devoid of any masonry structure,save the crematorium ; there is a raised platform, wherein corpses are burnt, especially when the river is in floods. This was recently erected by public subscriptions, under the great influence of Baboo Moti Chand, a premier Banker and Zemindar of the city.



GUNGA MAHAL AND BHONSLA (GOSLA) GHAT.

We have already observed that the Manikarnika is the centre of Kâshi, having been so located. It is "the pivot of the religious life of Benares." "There is perhaps no more extraordinary sight in the whole world," says Mr. E. B. Havell, "than this ghat presents any morning in the month of Karthik, or at the time of a great Hindu festival."

The magnificent Bhonsla Ghat with its massive structure presents itself immediately below the Manikarnika. The Bhonsla or Gôsla Ghat along with the adjoining Ganga Mahal, contribute much to the great attractiveness of the river frontage especially at this part.

Ganga Mahal was erected by Pandit Vani Ram of this city. But this structure is now in the castody of the Maharajah of Gwalior. It is a massive stone building with three stone-carved domes, above the solid stone balustrade giving the building a majestic frontage.

The Bhonsla Ghat was erected by the Maharajah of Nagpur in the year 1,795. In popular parlance it is called Gôsla Ghat. The Bhonsla family were reputed Mahratta Scions of the royal family of the Peishwas of Central India, who established their capital at Nagpur. Their various acts of charity are well known in Upper India, and, of course Benares had its legitimate share of public gifts, charities and beautifying edifices. Hundreds of homeless Mahratta Brahmins get free messing at this charity house every day, the expenses being met by sanctioned large donations, invested safely in property and otherwise. This Ghat has two stone domes at the corners upon stone masonry juttings out of the main structure, with a central balustrade topped with small stone-built, two storied rooms, serving as music halls. They are called Naubhat Khana. Below this is the entrance door from the ghat. During monsoon season this entrance door remains under water when the river rises high during the floods.

The next most striking scenery is that presented by the leaning, massive stone, unfinished towers and turrets. These ruins are the unfinished structures of an immense ghat that a Maharashtra lady wished to erect at this spot. Baija Bai, a rich widow of a Maharastra nobleman, in the early years of the last century, started erecting a grand palace and a substantial ghat at this spacious spot. But, unfortunately. owing to weak foundation and the extraordinary heaviness of the superstructure, it shook and sank behind, very peculiarly, not towards the river as is natural but towards the steep bank. The unfinished facade and the shattered steps of the Ghat, are still to be found lying in a confused heap.

" A curious story is told of the cause of the subsidence. It is said that the workmen were hampered by a small stream of water issuing from the bank, and that in attempting to trace it to its source they opened a cavern in which was discovered an old man The latter questioned them on current topics, such as the recovery of Sita by Rama of Ayôdhya, and on hearing of the events that had occurred during his long retirement, and that Benares was in the hands of another race, he forthwith leaped into the Ganges, and was seen no more."—District Gazetteer, Vol. xxvi.

There is also another rendering that, when the old sage was disturbed by the workmen to leave the place and to shift himself to a different one, he remonstrated and declared with authority, that no Ghat however strongly built will ever stand on this spot, and he plunged into the Ganges and disappeared.

It must also be said, that, since the occurrence of this peculiar incident, this dilapidated leaning ghat, had always been the " camping ground for the wandering Sadhus, or mendicant religious devotees, who travel throughout India from one place of pilgrimage to another, subsisting on the alms of the people. They are the modern representatives of the Bikshus of ancient times, and like them are recruited from all classes of Hindus."—E. B. Havell.

Below Scindia Ghat, and in the Chauk Ward, we have a few smaller ghats, Sankata Ghat, leading down to the water level by a flight of steps from the shrine of Sankata Devi; Kosala and Ganapathi ghats following immediately after.

The only other ghat of any importance in this section is that styled the Agnêswar Ghat, which lies to the north of the Bhonsla Ghat, between this and Ram Ghat, belonging to the Kotwali division. It has a temple of Agnêswar Mahadeva which is held



AGNESWAR GHAT.

in great veneration by the devotees. Reference is made in the Kâshi Khanda to this temple and its moorthy, as one of the holiest within the *Antargrihi*. The temple of Agnéswar is at the top of the precipitous flights of stone steps leading down to the water level. The breast work of the stone building is of an un-ostentatious nature, without any claims to architectural finish or beauty. This Ghat is the property of a Mr. Narayan Row, a Mahratta Brahmin and a *Kasivasi*.

We cannot pass over this part without making a hurried observation of the noted Dattatraya Ghat, which lies between Veerêswar and Manikarnika Ghats. It is so called because it is decked with a small temple dedicated to Dattatraya. Unlike the usual style of temples on this side. this one of Dattatraya is a square and not a conical one ; it contains within, the Charan Paduka or foot-print of Dattatraya, one of the twenty-four minor manifestations of the Parabrihmam.

The foot-print is to be seen on a round stone stab, fixed inside the shrine. Since Dattatraya taught the typical life of an ascetic—a Sidha Maha Purusha—it is generally believed, that whoever practises asceticism or thapas at the gate of this shrine, shall be blessed with great concentrating faculties. This temple is built in very close proximity to the Ganges, presenting a rather imposing sight though not with any architectural embelishments.

We go down to the various ghats in the Kotwali section. The first one that presents itself as with some importance is that known as Ram Ghat, the scene of the annual Ram Navami festival, famous for its great festivities and immense congregation of visitors and pilgrims, besides a no less crowdy flock of Vishnavite devotees, sadhus and ascetics.

Passing on from the Ram Ghat just described, we come to the notorious *Chôr* Ghat, (the thief's Ghat). It is said that a notorious thief who lived somewhere in the labyrinths of the crowded Kâshi portion of Benares, used to come for bath in the Ganges by a narrow flight of steps leading from a crooked lane on the bank. Close to it, a priest has established a broken piece of one of the several famous Asoka's Monoliths, and worships it as a lingam symbol of Mahâdêva.

After passing through a successive line of smaller Ghats we come to the famous Panch Ganga Ghat, one of the five sacred places of pilgrimage. A really magnificent pile of buildings compose this Ghat or sacred bathing place It is commonly believed that at this stage of the Ganges, four other subteraneous sacred streams flow beneath, thereby enhancing the sanctity of the place. They are Dhùtapâpa, Darmanada, Kirananadi, and Saraswati.

It is said in the Puranas, that a *Devasthri* (celestial damsel) named Dhôratapapa, whose fame for purity was a proclaimed fact, once pronounced in a private affray with her Lord Dharma, a malediction by which he was converted into the Dharmanada (river of virtue), while his spouse was converted into a rock. The virgin, in the form of the rock, was by the extraordinary powers of her father, converted into a moon-stone, out of compassion. The *Chandrakantha*, melting in the moon, flew into a river called Dhoratapapa (Channel of Sin). Kirananada the third stream, was the brook of *Kiranas* of the Sun, that performed great penance to propitiate *Mangal Gauri*, whose shrine is in an adjoining ghat. The fourth one is Saraswati a favourite stream of the early Aryas, which also is supposed to mix with the Ganges, at this sacred spot, by subterraneous channels. The great sages who originally lived in Kashi, have considered the site as one of the foremost *thirthas* in Kashi ; which observance is still followed.

This Ghat (Page 70) is the strongest and the most spacious of all the Ghats on the river front. It descends by five flights of steps, all of them being very broad and deep; on account of the great space occupied by this Ghat a very large number of persons could conveniently bathe and perform their sacred ablutions. There are, besides numerous temples, in the turrets of this Ghat, all of them being dedicated to *Siva.* There is at the foot of the steep bank and just above the Ghat a comfortable platform into which several stairs of steps descend from the lanes of this part of the city.



LUKSHMAN BALA GHAT—(NEAR PANCHGANGA.)

One of such series of steps leads us to a spacious building called Lakshmanbala after Lakshmanbala the presiding duty of the temple located therein. The temple is a commodious hall in one of the upper storeys, standing on wooden pillars. One could always see in the temple hall, a number of devotees, either counting their beads in solemn meditation, or reading and expounding religious books to earnest hearers. Occasional music from the high buildings descend pleasingly charming the ears of passers by. In the principal shrine within the hall, there are, in a row, three *Moorthys*; the central one evidently a *Vigraha* of the presiding deity, the other two on its either side being

symbolical representations of the Sun and the Moon, reminding one of the simple element-worship of the Vedic Aryans.

Rev. Sherring rightly observes in this connection that, "It is the only temple in Benares, however, so far as my observation has extended, in which persons, seating themselves on the floor, engage formally in religious exercises. The temples in Benares and in Northern India generally, with their courts, porches, and subordinate shrines, though they, in some instances, cover a considerable area, are, for the greater part, of very narrow dimensions, and contain only one small room, in which. besides the presiding deity, several inferior divinities are frequently placed, leaving no room, enough for a dozen persons to present their offerings at one and the same time, and to observe the prescribed ceremonies in an orderly manner.

" Ascending another series of stairs from the Panch-Ganga Ghat, you approach the lofty mosque of Aurangazeb. known by the natives, as " Madhudas ka Dewra." The edifice itself is above the bank of the river, but its foundations sink deep into the ground; and their enormous stone breastworks extend far down the bank. Indeed it is said that the foundations of the mosque are as deep as the building is high. Although a century and-a-half has elapsed since this structure was reared, yet it appears as solid and strong as on the day of its completion, The massive pile is on the very edge of a steep bank or cliff; yet, not a stone of it has been loosened. There is a high wall, next to the street running by the western side of the mosque, which is continued round to the north-east corner. A door in the northern wall opens the way into the enclosure, in full front of the mosque: the latter being situated on its southern side. From the eastern side commences the long flight of stone stairs descending to the river. The enclosure is not sufficiently spacious to give the observer an ample view of the minarets; but, nevertheless, it is extensive enough to enable him to give a satisfactory idea of their symmetry and elegance. The mosque itself exhibits nothing striking, and, indeed, can hardly be called beautiful, It is plain and common-place; and, were it not for the minarets rising above, it would not be accounted a noticeable object in Benares. The minarets themselves have a delicate gracefulness about them which it is impossible to portray in words, and my photographic representation fails to convey the exactness and exquisiteness of the reality. I do not remember their exact height; but it is not less than one hundred and fifty feet, reckoning from the floor of the mosque. When it is remembered that the bank of the river on which this edifice stands, is nearly the same number of feet above the bed of the stream, it will at once be perecived that the minarets occupy a very prominent position in a panoramic view of the city. Although many of the buildings of Benares especially those in the neighbourhood of the ghats, are of a great height, yet they are all overtopped by the minarets, the clear forms of which, pointing upwards to the sky, may be discerned at the distance of many miles from the city. They were, originally some fifty feet higher than they now are, and were cut down to their present height, in consequence of exhibiting signs of weakness and insecurity. There is a stair-case in each tower, from the summit of which you gain a complete view of Benares and its suburbs, and of a portion of the surrounding country: but the ascent and descent are attended with considerable fatigue."

" It is astonishing that this mosque, although so much visited by Europeans, and regarded, by them, as one of the chief sights of Benares, should be almost abandoned by the Mohamadans. On Fridays, a small number of the faithful assemble within its walls for religious purposes, but on no other day ; and, during the remaining six days of the week, it is handed over to the care of two men. These consist of a Mulla and his servant, who alone have charge of the building. It seems that the office held by the Mulla was formerly held by his ancestors, who received it, possibly, from Aurangazeb himself."

" A small village was at one time, in possession of the mosque, from the proceeds of which its expenses were partially paid ; but it has lapsed to the Government; and, consequently the expenses of repairing and cleaning the Mosque, so far as I was able to learn. are defrayed by the contributions of the visitors Its existence in this part of the city, which is almost entirely inhabited by the Hindus, affords the strongest proof of the rancour and violence with which the Emperor Aurangazeb, opposed the idolatrous practises of the people, and endeavoured to propagate his own religion. Tradition says that on the site of the mosque, a temple once stood, which was removed in order to make room for it; and there is every reason to believe that the tradition is true. The Government takes care of the minarates, and keeps them in order."—Revd. M. A. Sherring.

We should not forget to mention the existence near the ascending stairs at this Ghat of three stone lamp stands, " cone-shaped and fitted from top to bottom with numberless bracket oil receptacles." On Deepavali and other festival days these lamp stands are lighted, when the sight is really worth seeing.

From the Pancha Ganga Ghat, passing downwards we observe a number of insignificant ghats. We may yet mention Sitla Ghat, Lal Ghat and Gai Ghat, (so called on account of a huge bull of fine workmanship in the centre of the stone steps), within the limits of the Kotwali Ward.

The further northern portion of the river-front comes under the Adampura Ward. The only Ghat of any importance, worth mentioning, is the Thrilochan Ghat, called after the Thrilochan Mahadeva in the vicinity. The Ghat is known as the Pilpilla Thirtha, and has two turrets projecting into the river between which devotees bathe and perform their religious ablutions.

The Thrilochan Ghat is the last pucca Ghat on this side, all the others. viz. ;— Mahee Ghat, Tilianala Ghat, and Prahladh Ghat—being only nominal and least frequented, except by the people living close by. Rajghat, is only a landing place and not a bathing ghat; and it is just under the Dufferin Bridge.

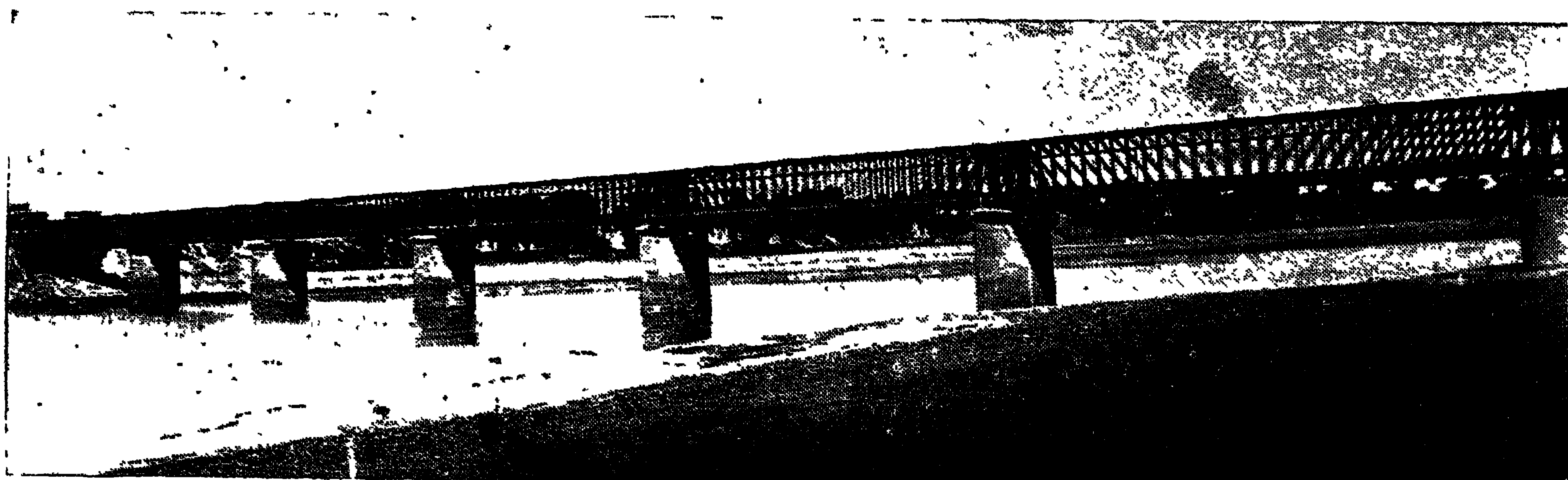
Passing the bridge, we notice a high bank marking the spot on which the old fort of Rajghat, said to have been built by King Banar, existed. It must be mentioned that this place is one of undisputed antiquity ; it was restored to a slight extent during the great Indian Sepoy Mutiny ; but has since been neglected, as unhealthy.

Proceeding further down the river, we halt at the meeting of the Barna with the Ganges, otherwise called Barna Sangam. This is the fifth Thirtha of the five prominent ones mentioned already. It also occupies an important part in the Panchakosi pilgrimage. There are only few buildings at this spot though a number of temples in ruins are discernible.

A few details of the bridge we have just passed through, may be of interest at this juncture. It consists of 16 spans, seven being of 331 feet each and nine of 103 feet each. It has a total length of 3,507 feet. The railway lines being laid on a thin metalled road over the bridge, which is highly railed on both sides, Vehicular traffic is allowed to pass through, on other occasions than when it may be required for use of passing trains. Foot-paths on both sides of the central main road, facilitate the crossing of the river of passengers, during all hours. Ornamental, folding iron-doors are provided at the western end of the bridge near the Kashi station.

The bridge was completed on the1st of October 1887, during the Viceroyalty of the Late Lord Dufferin, at a cost of Rs. 4,704,771, after whom it is called the Dufferin Bridge. His Lordship personally opened the bridge in company with his valued and esteemed friend, the Late Maharajah, Ishwari Prasad Narayin Singh G.C.S.I., of Benares, when Mr. J. J. F. Lumsden. the Chief Commissioner and Agent to the Governor-General, and the Viceregal staff were present, besides Mr. W. Walton, the Engineer in charge of the bridge.

For the convenience of the residents of this part of the town, as well as for the use of the Railway staff, the authorities have erected a stone paved ghat, below the bridge.



DUFFERIN BRIDGE—A SECTION.

■

CHAPTER III.

THE GHATS—MIR GHAT TO ASSI SANGAM.

As we float up the river, having seen the series of Ghats from Manikarnika to Barna Sangam, we find the celebrated Man Mandir Ghat, with a considerable frontage. Ere we proceed to observe the Man Mandhir, let us speak of the Nepalese Temple and the historical Mir Ghat, close by.

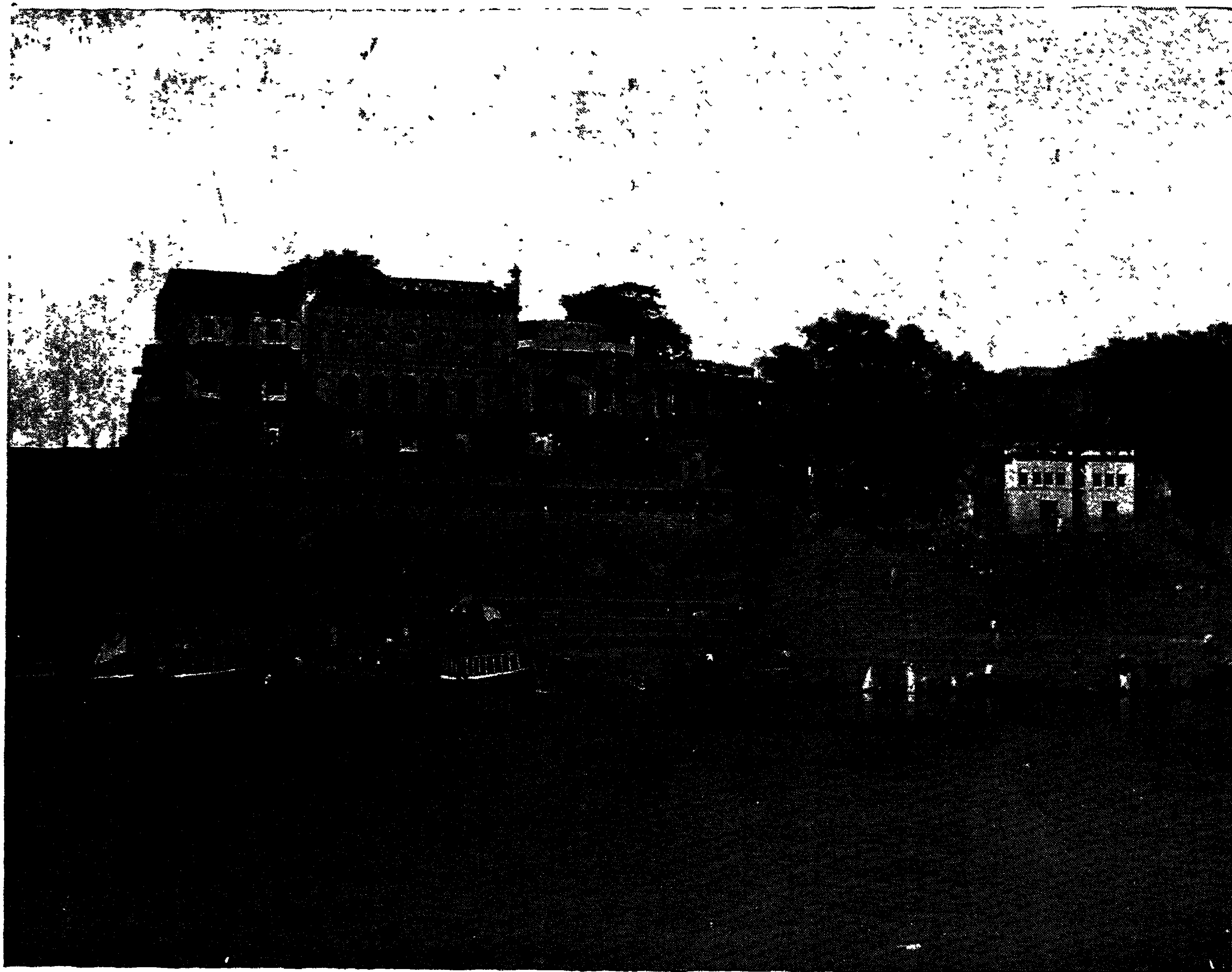
The Mir Ghat is named after Mir Rustam Ali, who was a sub-lessee Governor of the province of Benares proper, Jaunpur, Gazeepur, and Chunar, under the Nawab Vazír of Õudh, to whom he was also a personal friend. When Sufdur Jung occupied his uncles place as Nawab Vazir, and when bad reports of Mir Rustum Ali's indolence and indifference to legitimate business of the Province, was reported against him by his enemies, he was removed, and the territory given in favour of Mansa Ram and Balwant Singh in 1738. After Rustum Ali's flight from the province, the palace and fort he had erected at this part, were demolished and materials used in the construction of the fort at Ramnagar. The narrow flight of steps which still survive here, is still pointed as the Mir Ghat.

The next important place, worth paying a visit is the Nepalese Temple, and the Ghat. This is a fine little shrine, built of timber and brick. The characteristic Nepalese style of a double-storied roof with far projecting eaves, on brackets, make this, more on account of its novelty in this part of Hindustan, a captivating scenery. The wood work of the building is richly carved with various figures It was built and is still under the Ruling house of Nepal.

Now we come back to view the noted Man Mandir, erected by Rajah Man Singh of Amber in 1600. It is perhaps the oldest of buildings in the river side of Benares and has still maintained its huge structure, though not in great repairs. It has stood on the river bank, three long centuries since its first erection. " It was" says Mr. E. B. Havell, " a very fine specimen of the architecture of that period, and the beautiful stone balcony, which is the chief feature of the present facade is part of the original work. Unfortunately, the greater part of the building fell into ruin, and about the middle of the last century was restored with brick and plaster of a very inferier style. A picture by Daniell, now in the rooms of the Asiatic Society, Calcutta, shows the original facade as built by Man Singh."

It was converted into an observatory by Raja Jai Singh, a descendant of Raja Man Singh, the original builder of the structure, in the year 1693. Raja Jai Singh was a great scholar and a distinguished astronomer. The Hindu calendar was then very incorrect, and Mohamad Shah, the Emperor, ordered Jai Singh to corect it, as the best man for the work. He accordingly prepared a new set of tables, which, as the correct one

was adopted. Jai Singh also erected huge observatories in Delhi, Muttra, Ujjain and Jaipur, besides the one mentioned already. The invention of the instruments, that are still in the observatory, was made by the Indian astronomer, whose genius planned and erected this masterpiece. These instruments are of gigantic size, and are built of strong masonry capable of lasting for ages. But little use is made of them beyond the calculation of the eclipses, and some other events.



MANMANDIR GHAT AND OBSERVATORY.

It was to the keen insight into the science of the late Pândit Bâpu Dêva Shastri, C.I.E, who was an Honorary Member of the Royal Asiatic Society, London, and a Professor of Mathematics and Astronomy, Sanscrit College, of this city, that we owe the explanatory pamphlet about the seven instruments in the Observatory.

The principal *yantra* is (1) the Bhittiyantra or Mural Quadrant. As you go up the Observatory, this instrument is the very first that strikes your view. It is only a wall of bricks and chunam in the plane of the meridian, having a walling 11 ft. by 9¼ ft. This is to ascertain the sun's altitude and zenith distance at noon, and also the Sun's greatest declination and the latitude of the place.

There is another instrument called Yantra Samrat (the Prince of instruments), with a wall 36 ft. long and 4½ ft. broad; it was designed to ascertain the distance from the meridian and the declination of any planetry star and the sun, also the right ascension of the star can be known.

The third instrument is the Equinoctical circle, from which the distance of the sun or the star (from the meridian) when it is in the northern hemisphere, may be ascertained. The fourth instrument which resembles the Yantra Samrat referred to already lies to the east of the Equinoctical circle. The fifth, Chakrayantra, lies between two walls; the declination of a planet or star may be found by this instrument. A large instrument called Digansa Yantra, being the sixth, lies to the east of the above, enabling



MAN MANDIR GHAT SUN'S ECLIPSE DAY, OCTOBER 1911.

the ascertaining of the degrees of azimuth of a planet or star. The last and the seventh instrument in the observatory is another Equinoctical circle.

This magnificient Man Mandir Ghat with its double importance of having a structure with antiquity of an over three centuries in more or less repairable condition, and of an observatory with astronomical instruments, commands great interest in this locality for pilgrims as well as tourists.

The steep flights of steps of this ghat and the large number of them, could well accommodate a very large congregation of people; as during the sun's eclipse in October last, we saw a crowd of several thousands of people in this ghat alone.

Now we arrive at a very prominent ghat, perhaps the most frequented by all classes of people, pilgrims, and sight-seers, and one which is the central seat of so many mêlas during the year. It is also a very ancient site, sanctified by the Gods. The name Dasaswamedh by which it is known, alludes to the ten horses sacrifice performed by Brahma himself, at this spot.

This is one of the Pancha Thirthas in Kashi, every pilgrim being enjoined by the Puranas, to perform his ceremonial in all of them. The allusion to the name Dasaswamedh, is detailed in the Kâsi Khanda, that when Màhá Dêva retired to Kailás temporarily, his beloved kingdom was usurped by the traditional Divodâs, who held it



DASASWAMEDH GHAT—SUN'S ECLIPSE DAY, OCTOBER 1911.

very powerfully for several years. In order to reclaim the city from Divodâs, several attempts were made, unsuccessfully, and what Brahma is supposed to have done at this spot, was also a failure. It is said that Brahma, assuming the form of a Brahman, requested King Divodâs to furnish him with materials for a horse sacrifice; it being one of the most complicated of all the Brahminical sacrifices, requiring a perfect knowledge of the divine science, it was thought he might be ejected as unfit from Kâshi, were he to commit the slightest error in any detail. On the other hand, the capable Divodâs, supplied materials enough, not for one sacrifice, but, for ten, which were duly performed by Brahma, at this identical spot, on the banks of the Ganges. Not being able to oust Divodâs of his Kingdom, Brahma left the job to Siva himself, who is said to have finally got rid of Divodâs through stratagem only, played at the instance of Ganesh,

As we have observed already, this may have an allusion to the probable historical ascendency of the Buddhists over the Kâshi portion of Benares as well, in their brighter days, and to the subsequent restoration of Kâshi to the Brahmins.

Or, in plainer words, it may be said, that the Dasaswamedh Ghat had its origin about the time of the restoration of ancient Brahminism, on the downfall of Buddhism, which, in the preceeding period, was reigning supreme. It is yet a doubtful question whether the Buddhists ever had such an influence or authority as to upset an existing, older religion of an established antiquity; for, the greatest of its supporters, Asoka, for



DASASWAMEDH GHAT—RAJA PUTTIAH'S TEMPLE.

instance, was one of the most tolerent of Indian monarchs, as he allowed all creeds to live side by side. The mention of the name Divodâs in the Kâshi Khanda, and the story above detailed, only need better authentication.

This famous Ghat is still, to some extent, the landing one, for the Chunar freestone, so largely used in Benares buildings. This is the only ghat in Benares, access to which by conveyances is possible, since all the roads of Benares converge to this centre. Visitors to Benares, as a rule, arrive at this ghat, ere going up and down the Ganges, on

boats. The excellent amphitheatre formed by the Ganges, along the high bank of Benares, starting from the Assi Sangam to the Barna Sangam, casts the magnificent beauty of this ancient city, in a highly impressive manner, on the visitor.

It is said that, since the performance of the Dasaswamedh sacrifice, at this spot, Brahma had stayed away here only, not being able to fulfill the mission he was sent for. There are three temples at this ghat, two of them being dedicated to Dasaawamêdêswar, Brahmêswar, respectively. These two represent the Vighrahas established by Brahma himself. The former is a large Lingam representative of the Mahâdêva. The latter contains a symbollic representation of Siva as Mâhêshvara, representing Brahma, Rudra, Vishnu and Sûrya. Two sculptured *Nandis*, one against each, establish



DASASWAMEDH GHAT—SUN'S ECLIPSE DAY, OCTOBER 1911.

Dharma, as the predominent duty of aHindu, or, *steady fidelity*, as the ultimate winner, of the distant goal. The third temple with its very deep foundations, almost at the slope of the ghat, seems to be one of a greater antiquity, having traces of the primitive *Sûryanamaskârams*, still observed in many parts of the country. The name *Sûrya Narâyana* suggests, on account of the peculiar combination of names, that the Vedic Sûrya was subsequently identified, with the Narâyana or Vishnu.

This ghat presents an imposing sight during the month of Karthik, corresponding to the English, October-November, when the beautiful clay images (painted) of Durga or Kali, are thrown into the Ganges, attended by music.

After the nine days of continual festivity, preceding the Vijia Dasami day, all the images of Durga or Kali, leave their temporary shrines, and are carried in procession to this ghat, and handed over to the boatsmen to be immersed in midstream.

This ghat is also the centre of several mêlas during the year; and it is perhaps, the most crowded, during any of the eclipses; the management of the immense congregation of pilgrims on such occasions, being a work requiring such capacity and patience, that those responsible for preservation of order, must have a tedious yet, creditable work.

During the recent eclipse of the sun in the month of October last, on the eve of the Dipavaly, the number of pilgrims that collected at this ghat alone, not to speak of the several thousands at other places, was simply innumerable. A glance at the accompanying illustration, which indicates the crowd of people passing about the main street



DASASWAMEDH ROAD—SUN'S ECLIPSE DAY, OCTOBER 1911.

leading to the ghat, may give an idea of its number. At this part of the road where it is about 100 feet broad, if the crowd was such, we can easily guess what might have been the state of the rushing people on narrower parts up the road.

Two more illustrations of two sections of the Dasâswamêdh Ghat give an idea of the really large congregation of bathers, that assembled during the said sun's eclipse. It must be mentioned in this connection, that there were no accidents reported, in spite of such large collection. Most of them were people of the district that poured into the town, since the previous day, and almost disappearing on the day following.

Recently, a new building has been erected by some priests in the neighbourhood, dedicating it to Rama, the hero of the Ramayana It is a fine red-brick building with three stories, and adds, from its excellent locality, further attraction to the already pretty frontage, the city presents at this ghat.

There are two highways leading to this ghat ; the older one, a stone-paved way, between the Sitala and the Putia temples ; and the new one, which was until recently unmetalled, but now in good condition, having been thoroughly metalled.

The importance of the locality is being considerably enhanced, day after day, by rich and palatial buildings, and by numberless attractive stalls, of useful articles on either side of the roads, leading to this ghat.

Just above the Dasâswamêdh, is that of the Sitala Devi, (the Goddess of small-pox), a manifestation of universal *Sakti* (the destroying element). It is a low flat-roofed building, without any architectural beauty. This temple is much frequented by numerous worshippers anxious to gain the good graces of this Devi. The Vigraha must evidently belong to an ancient period as indicated by many obliterated details, of the carving. There are in the temple several *lingams* in prominent places. There is also



THE GHATTIAHS ON THE DASASWAMEDH GHAT. K. S. M. & CO.

a representation of Siva and Parvati in a corner, in the back ground, worshiped as Maha Vishnu and his spouse Lakshmi.

Next to the Sitala Ghat, there is a stupendous pile of buildings, still popularly known as the Ahalya Bai's Ghat. It was built by the famous Maharâshtra princess Ahalya Bai, whose endowments to religious purposes, especially in Kâshi, are too well known to be told a-new.

The next imposing structure is that erected by Munshi Sridhar Narain Das, the architect of Ahalya Bai's Ghat, and a Dewan of the Peishwas of Nagpur. It is a solid stone structure with two stone pillasters in front of the river. Its exquisite little chambers which are carved beautifully, remain at the top of this lofty building on both sides, adding to the general scenery and beauty of the frontage in a remarkable manner.

It has recently been purchased by the Maharajah of Dharbhanga, under whose custody it now remains. A part of this Ghat is reserved for the use of the Mohamadans in the neighbourhood, a privilege secured to them since the time of Aurangazeb.

Above the Munshi Ghat, there is the fine palace of the Rana of Udaipur and the Rana Ghat, having the Pande Ghat between the latter and the one of Chausatti Devi. It must be mentioned that many of the Ghats in this locality are occupied either by venerable *sanyasis* or there are *anna chattrams* or free messing institutions, for the poor Brahmins, supported by Rajahs and Maharajahs. The educated Sanyasis living in these palatial buildings, are, many of them, reputed professors of Sanskrit, having a number of disciples or pupils, who are freely taught, not only religious tenets, but also efficiency in general literature and grammer.



CHOWSATTI GHAT, AND RANA MAHAL GHAT.

The Chausatti Ghat is named after the Devi of the same name, whose shrine is at the head of the steep flights of steps, leading down to the water level. The temple opens by a small stone door, and the space within is not, as usual in most of the Benares temples, spacious enough to allow a large number of worshippers to have access to it, on important days. This was built by Maharajah Prabaditya, the last of the Gupta Kings of Bengal.

Passing further on, up the river front, we come to the Chauki Ghat, of no further importance than containing a few shrines; One of the most popular ones at this spot being a number of Nagars, carved on stones, placed around a raised platform, round an old and shady *pipall*-tree, which also contains a lingam representing Mahadeva. We dare not offer any suggestion as to how or when the worship of Nagars (Snakes), symbolising Bhû Dêvi (Goddess of Earth) came into existence, though it is a common observance in many parts of the country, precedence even amongst the Brahmins, chiefly amongst the ladies. The *pippall* tree has been associated with the Indian ceremonials since the earliest times. Its dried sticks are used in performing all kinds of *hômams*, household as well as long and scientific sacrificial, in rearing their Agni. (Fire.) Its holy shade has contributed to the solemn contemplation of many a Yogi or Philosopher, as it was in the case of Sakhya Singha, who glowed forth as the resplendant Buddha. It is believed to be the *Brihma Vriksha*, (the king of the trees) and is generally reared in conjunction with the Morgosa, with great care, surrounding its sanctified area with circular or square masonry or other raised platforms.

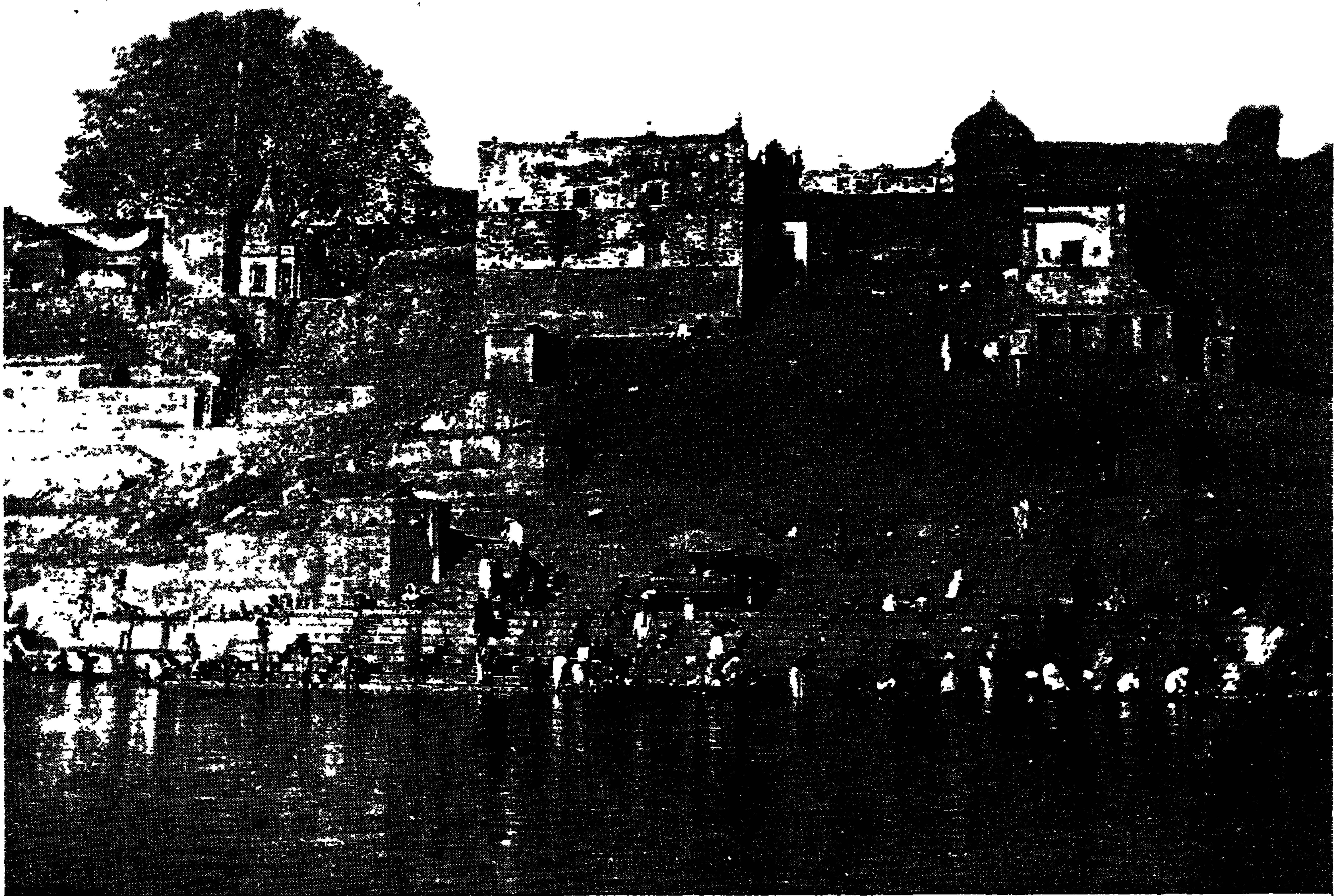
The next ghat is the second burning one (smasan) for this part of the city. In the vicinity of this Ghat, could be found many suttee stones indicating the spot where husbands or wives, sacrified themselves in the funeral pyre of the other.

Many Aghôris live about this part of the city; they are a class of ascetics, who are supposed to practise the difficult task of cherishing no aversion to even the most abominable and unclean or putrified objects, since everything proceed from, and, are part of the original Brahmam. It is also said that many aghôris do not, as a matter of fact, eat anything and everything without discretion, or encourage a continuance of such an observance. It may be said, that they, rather, so drill themselves, as not to care for such surroundings or better not to have any hatred for any object on earth, viewing everything in a broader light, and as emanations from the only origin.

We pass on, from this burning ghat, to a series of some of the finest in the river front, like the Kori Ghat, the Gangamahal Ghat, the Muneswar Ghat, and the Chatra Ghat. The last of this series was built by Amrita Rao, of the Peishwa family; which is styled the Chatra Ghat, from a chattar or chatra which surmounts it. A little beyond the limits of the Dasaswamedh ward, and in the Belupura ward the first Ghat is that of Nârada, the *Dêva Muni* after whòm it is named. Above Nârada Ghat, we get to the Chowki Ghat, with nothing of importance about it, except, the growing, out of the flights of steps, descending into the river, a very large pipall tree giving shade to the shrine of Rukmêswar Mahadev, and several other minor ones inthe vicinity.

Proceeding further up, we alight, at the famous Kêdar Ghat, which derives its name from the temple of Kedarêswar, on top of the bank; a flight of steps descend, in the usual manner to the edges of watar. In the Ghat, is located a kund, called the Gauri (Durga) Kund, said to bestow many blessings on the bather. The only importance being the temple, whose main entrance is on the eastern side, though with a second gate on the city side, from a narrow road, which runs parallel to the Ganges, let us get into the temple which is very famous in this part of the city.

The temple is in the midst of a large quadrangle, with shrines surmounted by towers on the four corners of the space. Along the verandah which runs on the four sides of the main shrine in the centre, are many vigrahas and lingams. The principal temple is in the centre, which is also surmounted by a dome. At the entrance to the temple, stand one on each side, two graceful statues (Dwara Palakas). The door which immediately leads to the *Mulasthana*, between the *Dwarapalakas*, is fitted with a number of small lamps, which are all lighted in the evenings. In this connection, we may mention that the prime builder of this temple may be a gentleman from the Southern



KEDAR GHAT.

India, since it is customary in temples of those parts, to have similar *Dwarapalakas* and doors with lamps attached in the manner in which they are found in this temple, as may be gathered from the present managing representatives of this shrine, who belong to the famous *mutt* of Thiruppanandal of the Tanjore District, in Southern India.

There is an allusion in the Kâsi Khanda with reference to the existence of Kêdarnath's temple in Benares, being a counterpart of the famous " Kêdarnath " in the Himalayas. A devout Brahmin, named Kêdar, went to the Himalayas, in company with

the renowned Vasishta of the earlier ages, and acquired great virtues and merits as a pure devotee, that, at his death, he was deified by Mahadeva; and a temple that was erected subsequently in the spot, high up in the Himalayan Glaciers, grew to be the famous place, which attracts to this day, several pilgrims from all parts of the country. Vasishta, the friend of Kêdar, was told in a dream, that, he would have a residence in Benares as well. It is probable, that this Kâdarnath's temple in Benares was brought into existence, by Vasishta or by any of his numerous disciples. Anyhow, the temple always attracts a large crowd of worshippers, especially from the people in the locality. The Bengalees who form a good majority of the population of this ward, naturally, have access to it at all times. In this temple, there are also the vigrahas of Ganesh, Lakshmi Narayana, Annapurna &c.

Going up the river, and passing the Lali Ghat as of little consequence, we observe a few *Akharas*. One of them called the *Nirvanees*, a class of Nagas, since they go naked, have an establishment here for over three centuries, with a branch at Allahabad. The other *Akhara* is occupied by another sect of the same class, with a chief house in Baroda, and are called *Ñiranjanis*, being worshippers of the Arûpa Moorthy. (formless God).

The next striking ghat, one which reminds us of its various associations with past history, is the celebrated Shivala Ghat and Palace (page 55). The ghat and the Palace are both named after a temple of Shiva, in the bank.

The fortress and palace of Shivala was built by Baijnath Misr, the trusted and faithful cashier and adviser of Raja Balwant Singh, who always entrusted him with all his treasures in Lateefpur and Bijiagarh; the building of the above, and the restoration all other forts of the Rajah in proper defensive positions, having been done by the same capable gentleman. The fort was the town residence of Rajah Cheit Singh till his rebellion and flight in 1781. The melancholy history attached to this fortress need not be re-told. It has since the year 1781, been in the possession of the Government.

When Jwan Bukht Jehander Shah, one of the sons of Emperor Mohamad Shah, the last of the reigning Emperors of Delhi, became refractory and rebellious, the Emperor sent him to the care of the Nawab of Lucknow, who, too, not being able to keep him under control, was finally sent to Benares, where he was given an asylum in this memorable fort. Since then, his decendents, the Delhi Princes, continued to reside in this fort, with a show of dignity and honor. They still live there, though in a very impoverished state. The fort has since come into the possession of the present Maharajäh of Benares, after negotiations with the Local Government. The Ghat and the massive fortress present a very impressive and attractive front to the river. Out of respect for the descendants of the Prince of Delhi, the public do not generally use this ghat for bathing purposes.

We shall yet narrate one more interesting association, this historical fortress affords, viz.;—that it accommodates within its precincts a *mutt* or *asrama* of *Kapilapanthis*, (followers of Kapila Rishi) who is said to have lived in Benares about 700 years before Christ. There are about fifteen or twenty of these ascetics, following the tenets of the great Sankya Philosophy, living in the *mutt*. There is a Charan Paduka of Kapila

preserved in a small shrine within the fort. Laki Baba, a Diwan of Cheit Singh is supposed to have founded this *mutt.*

Just past the Shivala Ghat, and as far as Assi Sangam, shooting of birds and catching of fish are forbidden, out of respect for the feelings of the Jains, who have a series of temples in this part. The sight, though devoid of masonry ghats or large palaces, yet is very interesting. The temples referred to of the Jains are close to the Shivala ghat and were founded by Rajah Bujraj who was in the service of the Nawab Vazir of Oudh. The temples are of a very recent date, and are without any pretentions to architectural beauty.

Above Bujraj Ghat is that of Rai Baldev Sahai, and above that, we have the noted Hanuman and Tulsi Ghats.

The former is a flight of steps said to have been built by a gambler named Ram Das, who made a vow to Hanuman to devote the proceeds of one nights play. In a house built above this Ghat, lived the famous Vallabacharya, the Vaishnavite teacher. He died in 1620, by accidentally falling into the Ganges, while preaching to his disciples on the spot where the Ghat now stands.

We shall now observe two more Ghats, ere we proceed to speak of the Assi Nalla or Ghat and they are the Tulsi Das's and Harischandra Ghats.

"The immortal bard of Avon," Shakespeare, was a contemporary of the immortal bard of Ayôdhya. Tulsi Das, who was born in the year 1532, left his parents and was taken up by a Sadhu. He led an ascetic life for some years and afterwards married and settled himself in Ayôdhya, where he commenced to write his famous Hindi Epic of Ramayana. He began his immortal work probably in the year 1574 A. D. He removed to Benares and lived for years near Lalarak Tank, close to the Assi Sangam. The Ghat close to the place where he lived was called after him.

Tulsi Das's Ghat stands close to Ralla Missr's Ghat, without any pretentions to magnificence, but in all simplicity, even as the sage, has only a few flights of steps leading to the water. Just above the steps, there is a temple of equal simplicity, but its sanctity is great, containing the sandals of the venerable. bard.

We need not dwell much on the impression Tulsi Das had left behind him amongst his Hindi speakers, but an idea of its extent may be measured from the fact that his Ramayana is in the mouth of even the most illiterate cultivator or menial in the province. The late Mr. F. C. Grouse, Collector of Mathura, translated this work into English, in which the late Maharajah, who was an adept in Hindi Literature, helped him with notes and annotations. The contributions of the Maharajah to this branch of Hindi Literature, excited the admiration of some of the European Scholars.

In conclusion, we cannot refrain from quoting a missionary gentleman who thus speaks of the Ramayana of Tulsi Das :—"It is the glory of God and the eternal honour of Tulsi Das, that from the beginning to the end of his Ramayana, there is not a single impure thought to be found. And this is more than can be said of Valmiki's Ramayana which is nevertheless the source and inspiration of the Great Hindi Epic."

The Harischandra Ghat, without any stone steps or palatial buildings or grand temples about it, only faithfully points out the identical *Smasân,* (burning ground) on which King Harischandra, who sold himself to the Dôm purchaser, for a sum of money which liberated him from the vicious hands of sage Visvamitra. It was here, that Harischandra discharged faithfully his master Dôm's services, in attending to the corpses burning in the *Smasàn,* and in collecting the dues of his master from the relatives of the dead. It was here that Tara, his beloved wife, also working as a maid servant under a Brahmin, in Kashi, brought her dead son for cremation, in the dead of night, and was stopped by the strict watchman Harischandra ; it was here, they were identified, one to the other, after a long conversation and it was here-from that Harischandra, Tara and Lohidas, were liberated finally, from all the difficulties they had undergone, by the proclaimed failure of Viswamitra, to make Harischandra to swerve from the paths of truth.

There is a small temple on the ghat and it is said that the Dôm who lives in the big building above the ghat, is the descendant of the purchaser of Harischandra Maharajah.

The undoubted antiquity of the place adds to the great importance of the locality, supported by strong tradition of the neighbourhood.

The southernmost extremity of the city is marked by a small stream called the Assi which joins the Ganges at this spot, being called the Assi Sangam. The open ghat in this section is called the Assi Ghat, one of the Pancha Thirthas.

The origin of the Assi, is attributed to Durga's sword, which, when let fall about the place, cut the stream, which hence has the sanctifying quality of expiating sins.

Close to this spot, there is a temple of Jagannath, which is the scene of two great mêlas about the Jeth and Asadh. Another fair is also held at Lohari Kundh.

"In the neighbourhood of the Jagannath temple are several *akharas,* or monasteries, the chief being that of the Bara Gudarji ,occupied for about three hundred years by Vaishnavite Bairagis, some thirty in number, and founded by one Gudarji, a member of the same order; it is supported mainly by the Maharaja, of Rewah. The Chota Gudarji, belongs to Bairagis of the same kind, but is a much smaller institution, dating from the eighteenth century and dependent solely on charity. The Digambari *akhara* contains ten Bairagis, who live by begging, and is a recent foundation; the name is derived from the fact they go naked. The *Bâid akhara* was established some fifty years ago, by a Vaishnavite Bairagi named Swami Ramdasjee Nand ; it possesses a small property in Khajuripur, near Chunar. Near the Assi Sangam is the Panditji *akhara,* a Brahmin institution, which was founded about 1845, by Tika Das; both secular and religious education is imparted to the disciples, and the place is maintained from the income of lands in Arrah and Darbhanga in Bengal. The Krishnachari *akhara* in the Assi Muhalla, was founded by a Mahratta Brahman named Krishnachari, who came here in 1865, and built a temple and school for Brahmins. There are some twenty disciples, supported partly from the interest on the endowment of Rs. 8000, and partly from a

tioned, are not to be considered as so many separate, nor indepedent Dêvas, as is generally misunderstood.

A reading of the following Sthôthra of Srî *Sankara*, the great reformer and restorer of Hinduism, as containing the prime essence of the Vedas, with reference to the worship of Kâsi Visvanâtha, might be explanatory of our observations :—

पशूनां पतिं पापनाशं परेशं गजेंद्रस्यकृत्तिं वसानं वरेण्यम् ॥
जटाजूटमध्ये स्फुरद्गांगवारिं महादेवमेकं स्मरामि स्मरारिम् ॥ १ ॥
महेशं सुरेशं सुरारातिनाथं विभुं विश्वनाथं विभूत्यंगभूषम् ।
विरूपाक्षमिंद्वर्कवह्नित्रिनेत्रं सदानंदमीडे प्रभुं पंचवक्त्रम् ॥ २ ॥
गिरीशं गणेशं गलेनीलवर्णं गवेंद्राधिरूढं गणातीतरूपम् ।
भवं भास्वरं भस्मना भूषितांगं भवानीकलत्रं भजे पंचवक्त्रम् ॥ ३ ॥
शिवाकांत शंभो शशांकार्धमौले महेशान शूलिन् जटाजूटधारिन् ।
त्वमेको जगद्व्यापको विश्वरूप प्रसीद प्रसीद प्रभो पूर्णरूप ॥ ४ ॥
परात्मानमेकं जगद्बीजमाद्यं निरीहं निराकारमोंकारवेद्यम् ।
यतो जायते पाल्यते येन विश्वं तमीशं भजे लीयते यत्र विश्वम् ॥ ५ ॥
न भूमिर्नचापो न वह्निर्न वायुर्न चाकाशमास्ते न तंद्रा न निद्रा ।
न ग्रीष्मो न शीतं न देशो न वेषो न यस्यास्ति मूर्तिस्त्रिमूर्तिंतमीडे ॥ ६ ॥
अजं शाश्वतं कारणं कारणानां शिवं केवलं भासकं भासकानाम् ।
तुरीयं तमः पारमाद्यंतहीनं प्रपद्ये परं पावनं द्वैतहीनम् ॥ ७ ॥
नमस्ते नमस्ते विभो विश्वमूर्ते नमस्ते नमस्ते चिदानंदमूर्ते ।
नमस्ते नमस्ते तपोयोगगम्य नमस्ते नमस्ते श्रुतिज्ञानगम्य ॥ ८ ॥
प्रभो शूलपाणे विभो विश्वनाथ महादेव शंभो महेश त्रिनेत्र ।
शिवाकांत शांत स्मरारे पुरारे त्वदन्यो वरेण्यो न मान्यो न गण्यः ॥ ९ ॥
शंभो महेश करुणामय शूलपाणे गौरीपते पशुपते पशुपाशनाशिन् ।
काशीपते करुणया जगदेतदेकस्त्वं हंसि पासि विदधासि महेश्वरोऽसि ॥ १०॥
त्वत्तोजगद्भवति देव भव स्मरारे त्वय्येव तिष्ठति जगन्मृड विश्वनाथ ।
त्वय्येव गच्छति लयं जगदेतदीश लिंगात्मक हर चराचरविश्वरूपिन् ॥ ११ ॥

श्रीमच्छंकराचार्यविरचितवेदसारशिवस्तोत्रं

Every Hindu, whether a layman or an ascetic, who visits Kâshi, on a pilgrimage, necessarily performs his prescribed *snàna* (Sankalpa Pûrvak) in the Holy Ganges, in one or more of the Ghats, and proceeds to the Temple of Visvêswar (Lord of the Universe,) with *Pûja Samagriyas*, (flowers, sandal, Ganga &c) to pay his homages to the Lord Paramount. It is, in fact, the ardent desire in the devotees, to be blessed by the Lord, for future enlightenment and *Mukti* (Liberation from frequent births and deaths), that leads them to this sanctified temple; and not any mean desire to be favoured with any

worldly happiness. It is impossible to measure the depth of sincerity, in them, nor could they be easily criticised as idle idolators worshipping unworthy inanimate objects. The re-union of the human soul with the Supreme Parabrahmam, from which it had originally emanated, the sole ultimate goal of every living being on earth, is attained only, by strictly disciplined lifes, to gain which discipline, *Bhakti, Karma,* and *Gnana* are the only methods; (*Margas*) Bhakti or supreme love to god, *Karma* or disinterested application and execution of one's legitimate duties, as they present themselves without any consideration to the results; and *Gnana*, the third and the only noble method of realising immediately, the identity of the human soul with the Para-Brahmam.

So, *Bakti-Marga* is what is being suggested for adoption, as the fittest for the general mass, in Hinduism, since it may not be possible for them, to grasp and follow any higher methods, which only an advanced class of people could follow. Thus we see amongst the Hindus, the existence of *Bhaktas* in the majority, or worshippers of deified *Moorthys* of supreme emanations, and of incarnated *avathars*, like Rama, Krishna, etc. As a stepping stone, to the uninitiated, in the higher philosophies of Hinduism, *Bakti* and *Karma margas* produce beneficial results in the attainment of the goal. A sincere devotee after Mukthi, with an unsullied worldly life, cannot be debarred from due rewards, for the only reason of his not having had a chance of literary advancement, with which another might get liberation. A staunch devotee, in his inner soul, is practically identical with the Para Brahmam, which he is able to perceive in its real aspects, if not in the primary stages, at least when his devotion is established beyond the chances of receding.

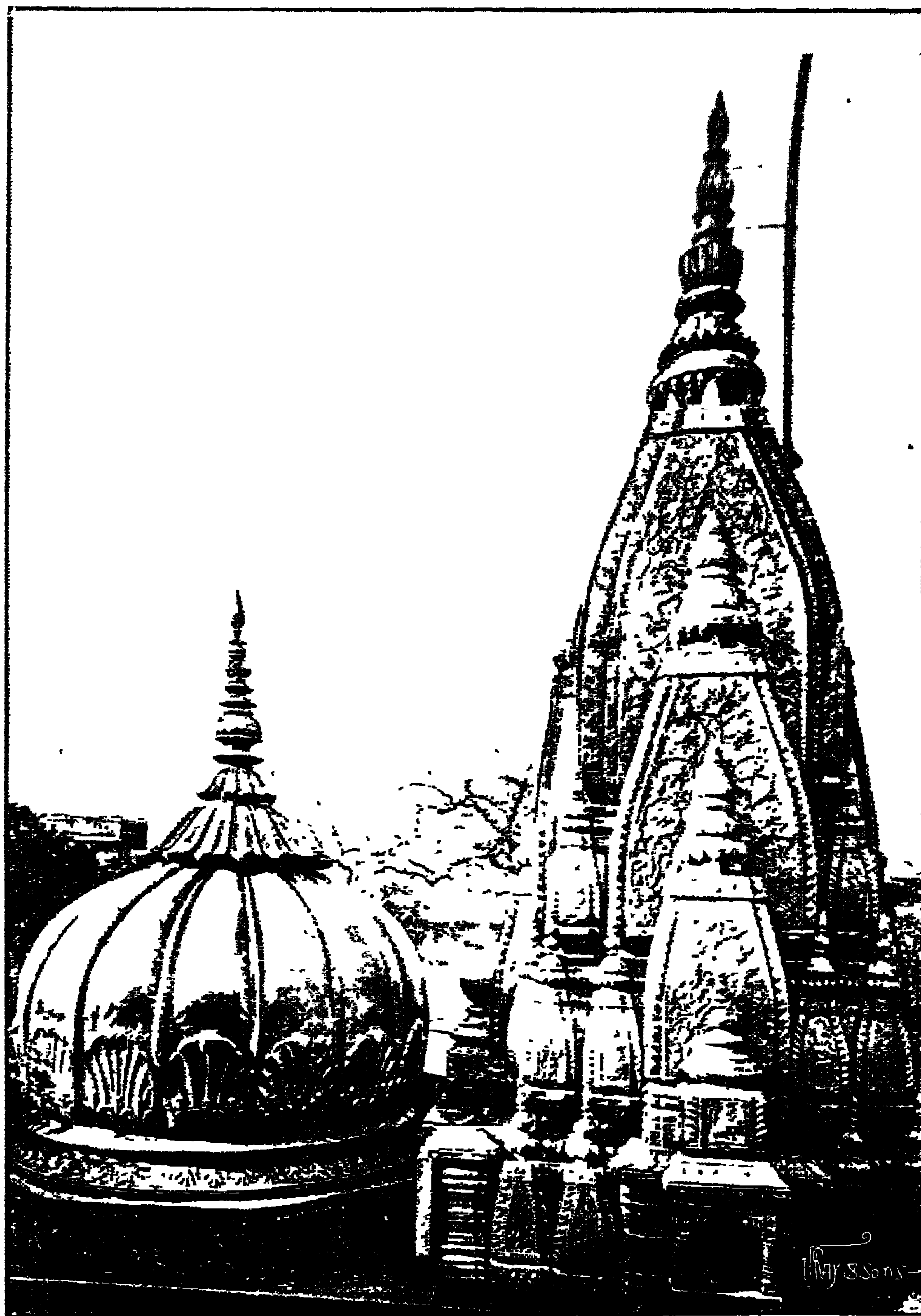
Let therefore, our *Bhaktas* or sincere devotees, perform their *puja* to Visvêswar, even as several *Gnanis*, ancient and modern, have done on all occasions. We need not mind the not-disinterested criticisms of other religionists.

Srî Visvanàth has had his homages paid, even more reverentially, by our ancient sages, our Epic heroes, our great reformers, and by the millions of Aryaputras, since the first colonization of Kâshi, and the establishment of the *Linga Moorthi.* Let us not be misguided as to leave the wholesome influence of the Universal Hinduism, which is highly comprehensive and elastic. It suits every one according to the stage in which he is. We should not hereby be supposed to approve all the meaningless and tedious ceremonials, which may be found to be unnecessary, at this stage, nor do we encourage the continuance of the abominable sacrifices or the following of aboriginal religious practices, still at vogue in many villages and uncivilized parts.

Having only uttered our sincere convictions in favour of the adaptability of the four-fold disciplinary methods, expounded by Sri Sankarâchârya, with a view to attain the *Môksha* (liberation), let us proceed to observe the temple of Vísvêshwar, regarding its locality, history, &c.

The temple of Visvêswar, the most frequented of all others in Benares, is situated in the Chowk Ward, with its main entrance opening into a lane, in one of the busiest and crowd part of the city. The present temple was built by Ahalya Bai, of Indore, and is situtated in the midst of a not-very spacious quadrangle.

The crowning spiral domes, over the roof of the temple, are covered with copper plates, overlaid with gold leaf, which gives the structure a distinctive attraction. The late Maharajah Ranjit Singh of Lahore, bore the entire expense of gilding the domes. There is a thin pole of *Dhawaja Sthamba*, with a crowning trident attached to it



VISVESWAR'S TEMPLE—GOLDEN DOMES.

In fact, the temple, as a whole, is divided into three sections, the first being a temple of Mahadeva, the second or central one being a common square and Belfry, while the third one is the temple proper of Visvêswar. These three sections are in a row, yet, and form the three parts of one and the same building, which itself is in the centre of the quadrangle referred to already. The whole temple is constructed of stone, and is exquisitely carved, with a good symmetry throughout. In the central Belfry, there are about 9 bells hanging, the largest of them in the centre being a present from the Maharajah of Nepal. On two opposite sides of this central temple above described, running parrallel to the position of the temple, are two roofed verandahs, in which are located a number of other deities.

In an enclosure, immediately adjoining and led by a narrow passage, will be found an oblong platform with a very large collection of lingams and other moorthys, forming the court of Visveswar. It is said that all of them were brought from the older temple of Visvêswar, which was to its north-west, in the spacious court-yard, next to it, and which was destroyed by Emperor Aurangazeb. Most of these Vigrahas exhibit considerable age and certainly they are not modern.

Proceeding into the court-yard, above referred to, we shall notice many objects attracting our curiosity and exciting our interest. Every part of this large space has some history or other to relate. Higher up in the raised platform, we shall observe a

large mosque, presenting in glaring characters, the extent of mischief wantonly committed by that most bigotted hater of Hinduism, the despotic Aurangazeb. It was purely on motives suggestive of offering the greatest insult to the Hindus, and a desecration of their sanctified Dêvalayas, that Aurangazeb, demolished the ancient temple of Viswêswar, raising in its hallowed locality, the huge mosque with its stupendous domes. It is an eye-sore to the Hindu, and a constant source of heart-burn, suggesting the depth of mischief inflicted on his rights and privileges. The existence of the mosque in such close proximity to his most sacred locality, and the several attempts of the Mohamadans, using the mospue for their prayers, to infringe on the rights and priveleges of the Hindu, over the remaining portions of the square, had given occasion to several nasty rebellions, with loss of life and property on both sides.

Walking round the mosque, toward its western side, we would notice extensive ruins of the ancient temple of Visvêswar, forming part of the wall of the Mosque on this side, suggesting the extraordinary size and splendour of finish, the original temple must have had, while the mosque, but for its huge size, displays no extraordinary attraction. A row of Hindu pillars support its elevation in the front.

Adjoining the mosque. between it and the present temple of Visvêswar, is the celebrated *Gnan Vapi*, ('well of knowledge') into which, it is said, that the lingam of the old temple, when being destroyed, was thrown in by a smart priest of the temple. Its importance besides, is that it was dug by the *Trisul* (trident) of Siva, at the instance of a great sage, to provide water, at a time of continued scarcity in Kási, in some olden days. The pilgrims visit this sanctified temple, for reasons stated. In the year 1828, Sri Maut Baija Bai, the rich widow of Sri Maut Daulat Row Scindia, built around this well, a beautiful *Mandapa* (colonade), with four rows of pillars; thus providing great comfort to the numerous pilgrims from the effects of the sun, for it was unsheltered before that date.

To its east, is seated, in great ease, a big *Nandi* (Siva's Bull) painted red, being a gift of the Raja of Nepal.

Still eastwards, is located a small raised shrine of Siva, dedicated by the Rani of Hyderabad.

Away, a few yards off, in a north-westerly direction, could be seen, from the platform adjoining the Mosque, a big tower, which dominates the modest roof of the temple of Adi-Visvêswar, which is said to belong to a period even anterior to that of the temple which Aurangazeb destroyed.

From this place, let us proceed to the temple of Annapurna, which is also located in the same lane on which the Visvêswar's temple stands, but a few steps off. This temple was built about 200 years ago, by a Raja of Poona. It is in the centre of a quadrangle surrounded by a low, stone-paved *Prakar*, for the pilgrims to perform their *Pradhakshinas*. There is a raised and roofed verandah all round the central *Prakar*; a portion of which is reserved for cows and bulls attached to the temple; in the remaining portion, there is in a corner, a well-carved moorthy of Súrya

(Sun) driving in a charriot driven by seven hores, while the figure of a huge *Hanuman* adorn another corner ; and a third one is occupied by the Vighraha of Gauri Sankar, and the public charity stone box. The remaining portion of the verandah, which is broader here, is almost always full of Brahmin Pandits, seated, solemnly engaged in pujas or, in meditation, or in expounding Puranas to hearers.

The main shrine occupies the centre and a greater portion of the quadrangle, being divided into two sections, the outer one, being open and standing on four rows of stone pillars, with three small doorways from it into the *Mula Sthan*, where Annapurna Dêvi is to be seen standing gracefully. This is the second popular temple with the pilgrims. It is customary that many pilgrims, leave at the disposal of appointed agents of the temple, large donations or gifts of coin or grain or rice to be distributed tô the poor, a flock of them always haunting the temple gate on both sides. The main shrine is very beautifully constructed, though lacking in great architectural beauty, with a spiral tower and a dome.

A few steps from the temple of Annapurna, at the corner of the lane, is a Ganesh, who is also adored by all passers-by.

The temple of Visâlâkshy, (Siva's wife) in a narrow lane, close to the Mir Ghat, was built quite recently, by the Nattukkottai Chetties, of Southern India, over a site adjoining the original one of this Dêvi. It is said that a large sum of money was spent for the fine little temple erected and for shifting of the image from its original place to the present shrine. The Panda of the temple now lives sumptuously, since it now fetches a good revenue, the temple having come under the immediate care of the wealthy jews of Southern India.

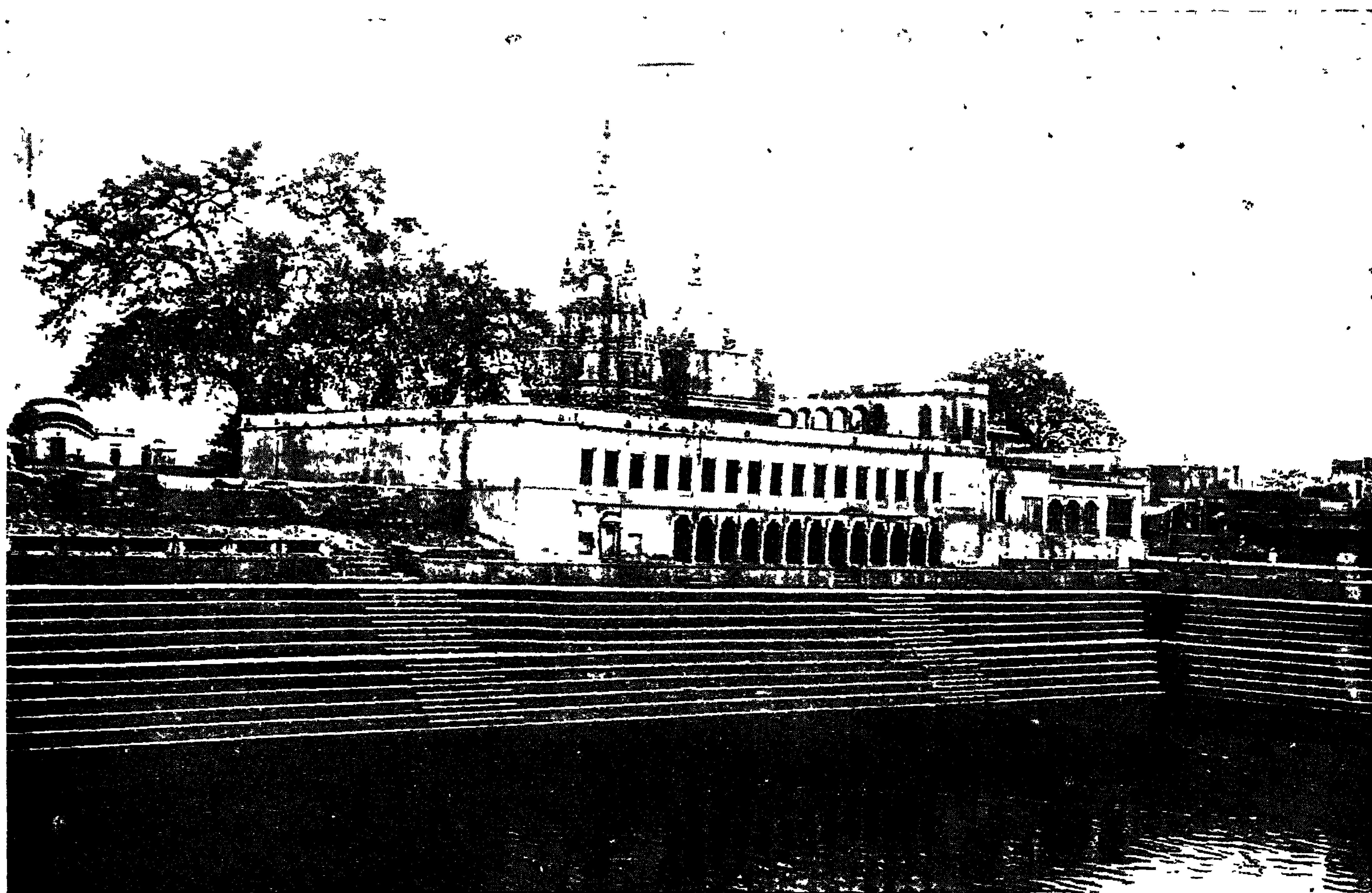
The temple of Dharmêswar and Dharma kup, are adjoining this temple and within the court of a temple of Divodasêswar which is also close to the Mir Ghat.

The next temple of importance, where every pilgrim has to go, is that of Bairava Nath or Kala Bairava. This is about a mile to the north of the temple of Visvêswar. It was built about a hundred years ago, by Baji Rao of Poona, on the site of the old temple which was pulled down for the purpose. It is an un-ostentatious, small stone structure, having, like the temple of Annapurna, a central main shrine surmounted by a dome, surrounded by a low, paved, Prakar and a raised, roofed verandah. As we enter the shrine, the first or front portion is an open *Mandapa* standing on pillars, with a door-way into the Mulasthan. Everywhere in the temple, in the Mandapam, and in the verandah, are seated many commercial vendors of what is called Vairava's *Prasadams*, which consists of black thread, knotted at intervals in a peculiar manner ;they are also supposed to act as agents of Bairavnath, to punish every worshipper with a rod of peacock feathers for faults committed during life. The shrine or Mulasthan of Vairavnath is not spacious enough to hold even twenty persons. There is a small copper temple within which Bairavnath is seated. The figure is provided with a Kavacha and a silver face, and always decorated, stands in an imposing attitude. A priest sits close by, to attend to the pilgrims and to take their offerings. One peculiarity of this temple which is strictly

prohibited in others, is that dogs have free access to all parts of the temple. There is also a statue of a dog by the side of the entrance to the temple.

Adjoining the temple of Bairavnath, and on its four sides, are (1) an older temple Bairavnath; (2) a temple of Sitala Devi; (3) a temple of Navagraha, and (4) a temple of Dandapani. In the last place, is located the famous Kala Kûpa or the Well of Fate, the Moorthy of Maha Kâl, and the figures of the Pancha Pandavas.

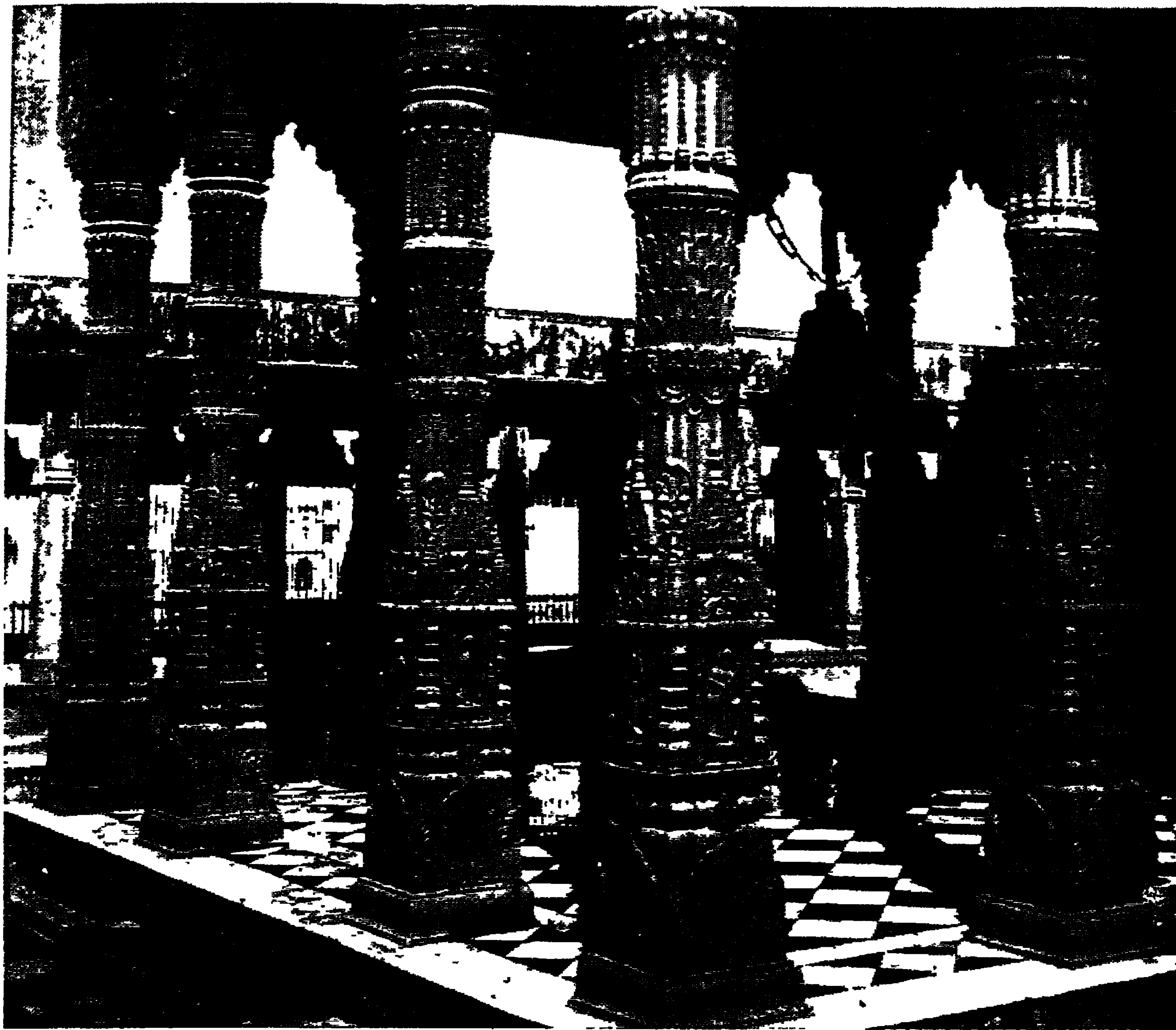
In the southern extremity of Benares, the most popular and the most frequented is the temple of Durga. It was built by the famous Rani Bhavani of Nattor, towards the



DURGA'S TEMPLE AND TANK. K. S. M. & Co.

end of the 18th century. The temple itself stands in the midst of a quadrangle surrounded by high walls. The main entrance to the temple is on the western side of the public road. In front of the door way, is a specially erected building in which drums are being beaten, and hence it is called Naubatkhana. Passing the narrow doorway, we enter into the interior of the enclosure, where right in front, are statues of two lions crouching on the floor. To the left, as we enter, we notice two small shrines, one dedicated to Ganêsh and the other to Mahadeva. To its south is a stone scaffolding with a bell hanging from its arch, being a gift of a Rajah of Nepal.

The main shrine and the porch outside exhibit two distinct buildings, and in fact, they were severally built in different periods, by two different personages. While the Temple was erected by Rani Bhavani, the hand some porch which stands on twelve magnificently carved pillars, was erected by a Subadar or a Superior Native Commissioned Officer. The floor is raised from the ground by about 4 or 5 feet. The whole is surmounted by a central dome, with corner cupolas. There hangs within the porch a huge bell, which is said to have been presented by a European Magistrate of Mirzapore. To the north of the temple, there is a large sacred tank within its jurisdiction. Four flights of stone steps lead feom the top to tne water level. The tank being situated on the main road, is largely used by people in the neighbourhood. This is called Durga-kund.



INTERIOR OF DURGAS TEMPLE

A short distance eastwards from the above mentioned kund, is the famous 'Kurukshetar Tank' built by Rani Bhavani. This place is frequented by people from the district in very large numbers, especially during any solar eclipse, when it is supposed to attain rare sanctity. We have seen during the recent sun's eclipse, in October last, that several innumerable thousands of people from the country, that came to this Kurukshetra for a bath, not only dirtied the little water in the tank, but also carried away, on their bodies, a good quantity of mire, since in their opinion even the earth of the holy soil is sanctifying.

The structural beauty of the famous Durga temple, can be well appreciated in this locality, not having crowded high buildings in its vicinity, as is the case with all temples in Kâshi. Goddess Durga holds her Majestic court in perfect silence, and, away

from the buz of the town, still attracting her devotees from all parts of the town as well as from amongst the pilgrims to Kâshi from other provinces. Great festivals are held in this temple, in the months of Chaitra and Sravan, which to the Goddess, are very endearing months. Tuesdays, as a rule, bring large collections of devotees to her; especially on the Tuesdays of Sravan, the really large collections of men, women and children, are worth seeing, since streams of them will be driving to and from the temple from morning to midnight. The excellent locality of the temple far away from the congestion of the town, is an additional point in its favour. which also induces many well-to-do gentleman residents of Kâsi. to take a pleasant drive with their children and their mothers, towards this Durga Temple. In having her locality, almost out of the sacred limits of Kâshi, Goddess Durga offers to such of her devotees as wish to offer a kid, in sacrifice to her, to do it without their infringing any rule or regulation. The temple besides, is the first halting place for pilgrims performing Panchkosi Yathras being midway between Khandwa and Assi Sangam.

Having so far observed the most popular temples of Visvêswar, Annapurna, Visalakshy, Vairav Nath and Durga Devi &c,, let us hunt, in some of the unfrequented localities, after a few temples of established antiquity.

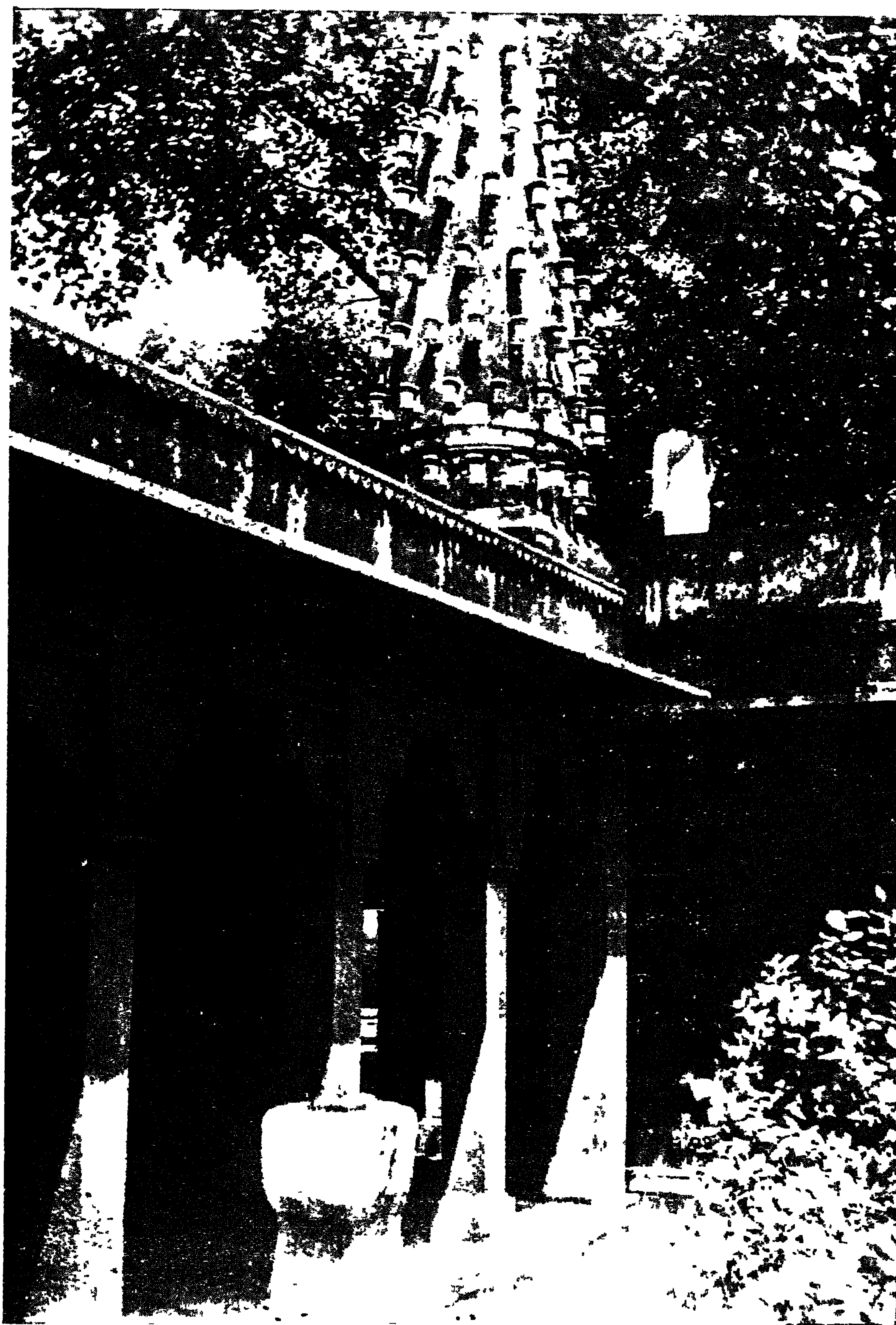
In the northern part of the city, beyond the Maidagin Gardens, in the midst of a number of lofty houses, will be found a series of independent quadrangles, which form the present remains of a once magnificient temples of Bridkalêswar, Dakshêswar, Alpamritêswar &c. These ruins represent the site of no small antiquity, being said to date from the Satya Kala, of several centuries. A king of those days, for his meritorious deeds and prayers to Mahâdêva, was not only blessed *with* celestial happiness, but also with an immortality of rare precedence. The Temple of Bridhkal (Vridha Kalêswar) was the one dedicated by the said Raja in commemoration of the extraordinary felicity bestowed on him. Hence, and from that date, this temple is the time-honoured resort of sickly or old people, desiring cure and restoration of health.

The original group consisted of twelve large quadrangles, with highly sanctified deities in each; but, now, we observe only about six or seven, the remaining quadrangles and the spacious gardens attached to them, having since been replaced by a number of human habitations, to be observed surrounding the present remains.

As we get into one of such quadrangles, by an only small entrance through a lane from the street, we meet a decent-sized statue of Mahavir, (Hanuman) at one corner; with a small temple to its right, of Kâli, wherein, into a cistern, will also be found a Mahâdêva. Adjoining this will be found a collection of Ganesh, Parvati, Bairav the Sun, Hanuman, Vishnu and Lakshmi. In the quadrangle, are located two wells, the one in the immediate front, being a shallow one, and said to cure several skin diseases. It may be that it is perhaps impregnated with sulphur and therefore, able to bring about, some good results to the patient who bathes in its waters. The other well, which has a raised wall round, contains crystal, sweet water, which is used for drinking and other purposes by a number of persons living in the locality. There are, besides, within this square, several lingams of no recent date.

Adjoining this square, there is another smaller one which has a small shrine of Nagêswar, in which the lingam is encircled by a Nagar (serpant). The next one is that occupied generally by a number of devotees, and its only charecteristic feature being that it has a shady pipall tree entwined by a neem (Margosa) tree.

The next quadrangle contains the famous temple of Bridhkaleswar, which is in one of the two rooms, occupying its centre. The Mahadev is in a cistern, and everything within and without this ancient shrine present a very old appearance. There is an image of Hanuman and another of Ganesh, in the outer verandah of the prime shrine, both of which also tell us of their great age. The main shrine is covered with a flat terrace without any of the domes, usually found in many modern temples. Everything about the place convince us of our belief as to its great antiquity. The whole remains, while they present a hoary appearance, have no other attraction, but that it reminds us of its original splendour.



VRIDHAKALAESWAR. K SM & CO.

The accompanying illustration, which represents the temple of Bridhkaleswar might give an idea of the solitary locality, neglected by the busy modern worshippers who always frequent the temples already described in the preceding pages.

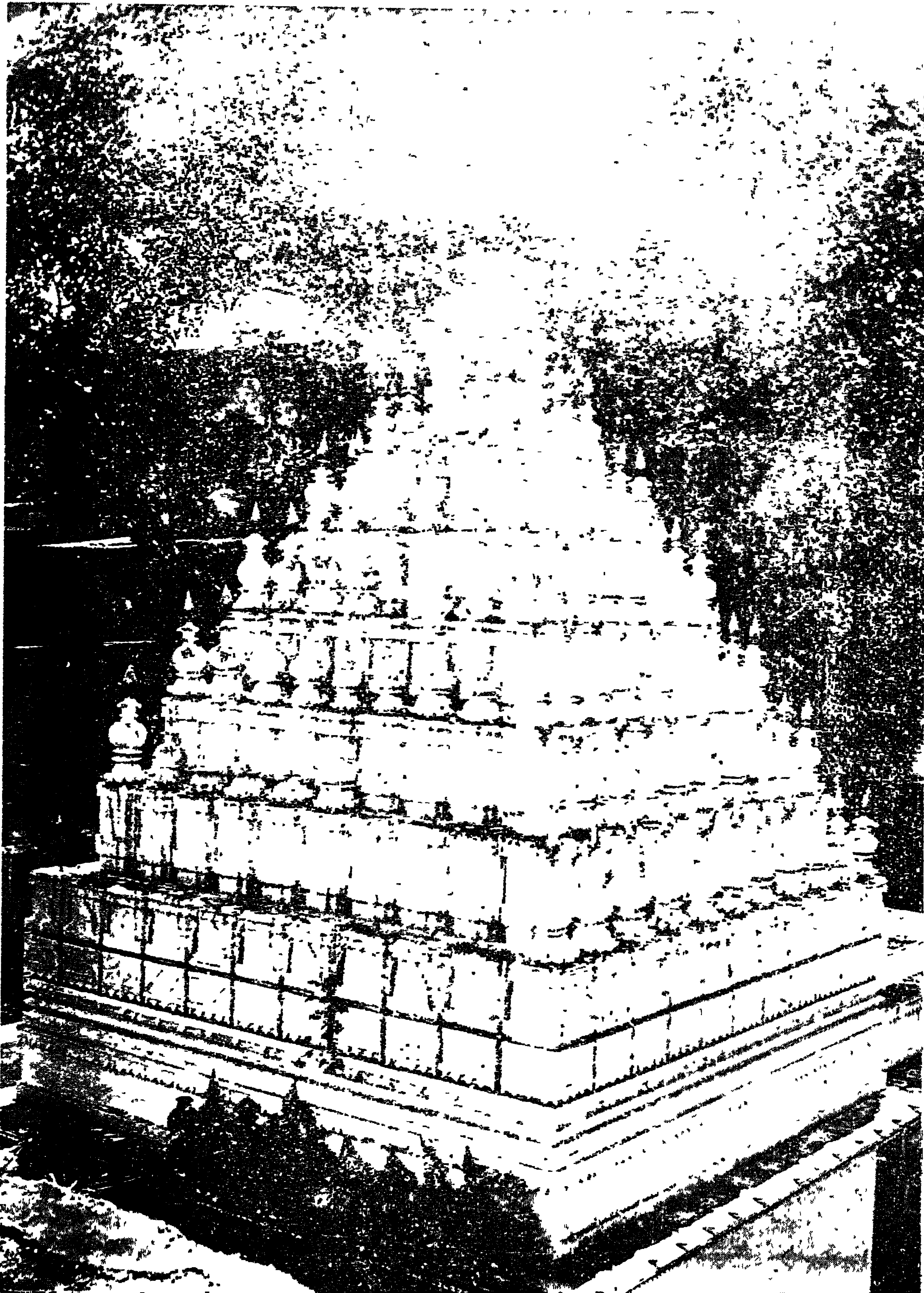
There are besides the shrines of *Markandêswar*, dedicated to Siva by the reputed bhakta Markandeya of the Puranic age; and of the famous *Dakshêswar*, whose details are elaborately described in the *Kashi Khanda* Raja Daksha, an ancient king and father of Sati, the wife of Siva, is said to have once, out of grudge, insulted his son-in-law Mahadeva, for which he was seriously punished by Virabhadra, Siva's Dhûta. At the instance of Brahma, who pointed out to Mahadeva, the extent of calamity caused by Virabhadra to Daksha and his family, the Lord feeling compassion, restored them all to life and original bloom. Upon which the King Daksha, greatly pleased, went to Benares and performed a series of penances and sacrifices, pleasing Siva thereby; the temple of Dakshêswar is the one that was then dedicated to Siva by Daksha.

Forming part of the Bridkal buildings, and being in its south-western corner, could be found, in the street adjoining a small temple containing a Mahadeva, also in a cistern, called Alpamriteswar. This temple has for its devotees such as are suffering a series of continued diseases, with a view to secure liberation or cure from such nasty diseases. Several Melas are held periodically in the grounds adjoining the buildings described above, being of not only religious but also of a secular character. The temple of Ratneswar, with its Mahadev said to sit over heaps of Ratna (precious gems) lies close by a lane leading to the Bridkal edifices.

While we are near Bridkal, let us proceed straight into the adjoining Iswar-Ganj in the Ausan Ganj Mahalla of the city, to see the " aristocratic temple of Jaggeswar," as Rev Sherring styles it, to which all the elite of Benares, from the Maharaja downwards, are said to resort, on occasions. The temple is located in a high ground a few feet off, from the lane leading to its main entrance. We go up a few stone steps before we arrive at a platform, at whosé opposite end, is the small shrine of Jaggeswar. This is an unimposing plain structure, of one room forming the main shrine, the greater portion of which being occupied by the Mahadava, which is of an immense size, being about six feet in height with proportionate circumference, about twelve. This temple is being looked after by the present representative disciples of a great sage who restered its old structures, adding a fine storied frontage and entrance above mentioned. This temple of Jaggeswar (yagêswar) claims an antiquity of several centuries if not as great as that of Bridhkaleswar and a few others, like Thrilochaneswar, which we shall now proceed to observe.

The popular temple of Trilochaneswar is another ancient temple in Kâshi claiming a considerable antiquity. As the name indicates, Siva, in this temple, is represented as the three-eyed Mahadeva. The allusion for the three eyes of Mahadeva is told thus:—Vishnu, who used to worship Siva, while in deep meditation, with a thousand flowers, found one day, the last flower missing; though confused at this strange occurence, yet Vishuu is said to have plucked out of the socket, his own eye, and offered it on the fôrehead of Siva, which stuck to the latter's forehead; hence, from that day, Siva, gets the appellation Thrilochaneswar. Performance of regular worship in this temple is said to secure final spiritual emancipation, which, to a Hindu, is the highest aim in life.

The present temple which is but a modern structure was erected by Nathu Bala of Poona, about a century ago But it is a fact, as authenticated by responsible



TRILOCHAN TEMPLE K S. M. & Co.

authorities, that the temple, as it is, stands on the identical site of the older temple which claims to have existed there from time immemorial. There are several images in the temple located in as many miniature shrines, some of which exhibiting the effects of long duration.

The temple itself which occupies the greater portion of the quadrangle, is composed of a porch standing on a number of pillars, opening into the main shrine, which is an inner room, surmounted by a beautiful dome in which the Lingêswar is located. From the roof of the porch, as usual, hang a number of bells, and on the floor which is beautifully laid with white and black square marble tablets, is the necessary *Nandi*. Into a brazen cistern in the shrine lies the Lingêswar and Parvati close by. The space immediately surrounding the temple grounds, is occupied by a two storied habitation, where, the resident Panda of the temple lives.

The Ghat which we have already noticed is named after Thrilochanêswar, and is said to be held in great esteem as a Pilpilla Thirtha.

In the neighbourhood of Thrilochan Temple, are those of Nirbuddhêswar and Adi-Mahadeva. The remarkable feature of these two temples is that they are very plain without any of the usual embellishments found in others. These temples also claim an antiquity as great as the one already mentioned.

The temple of Maneswar and the tank of Mânasarovar, located a few yards to the west of Kêdarnath Temple, in the Belupura Ward, need special mention, since the erection of both of them are attributed to the famous Raja Man Singh, the originator of the Man Mandir already noticed. The Rajah was perhaps, influenced to erect these structures, with motives of establishing his memorable name to posterity, which purpose, at any rate, has been well accomplished. The tank, a rectangular one, covers a very large area, and is furnished with flights of stone steps, on the four sides, down to the water level. We must say, that the present dilapidated and neglected condition of the tank exhibit a great age, to its structure. The tank is surrounded very closely, leaving only a narrow foot-path on its four sides, by a series of houses, some being lofty and beautiful while others are low and in ruins. The sight round the tank presents not quite an agreeable one, but for its importance of having in the locality many temples, ancient, and modern. We may say, there are perhaps, over a thousand images in the neighbourhood.

The famous temple of Thilubhândêswar, a huge lingam measuring about 4½ ft. in height and fifteen round, similar to Jageswar, already, mentioned, is located in this quarter of the city; this Mahadeva grew it is said, from a very small size, to this tremendous magnitude, at the rate of one *tila* (sesamum seed) *praman* every day. Hence the curious name of the Mahadeva.

Pilgrims to Benares, are invariably led to a spacious tank, styled Pisach-Mochan, situated in the out-skirts of the city, but within the Pancha-Kosi limits, there to perform their ceremonies, ere proceeding to Gya, without which, they would have no license to proceed to the latter place. It is said that a demon (Pisacha) "had the temerity to approach the holy enclosure in which Benares is situated;" that the deities in charge of the Pancha Kosi road, failed to stop him, owing to his great strength; that he was finally beheaded at the identical spot, where the tank is, by Bairav Nath: that on his application, he was appointed by Maha Deva to live in the spot, watching other

demons from entering the holy area of Kâsi. It is also said that all pilgrims must pay a visit to this locality, ere proceeding to Gya. The huge head of the demon. could be seen on top of one of the Ghats of the tank.

The tank is a square one, with stone ghats on all sides, built by various persons on as many occasions. Gopal Das Sahu, Mirch Bai, Balwant Roa Bakira, Raja Muralidhar, Raja Siva Sambar, and Binayak Rao, have all contributed to the erection of the ghats of this famous tank.

In a prominent position, on the eastern bank of the tank are two temples, one built by Nakku and the other by Mirch Bai, who had also contributed to the erection of a portion of the ghats. In one side of the beautiful temple are the images of Siva and the Demon's head, Vishnu and Lakshmi, and Hanuman; another peculiarity of this temple being that it has in another corner, a *Pancha Mukhi* Vinayaka.

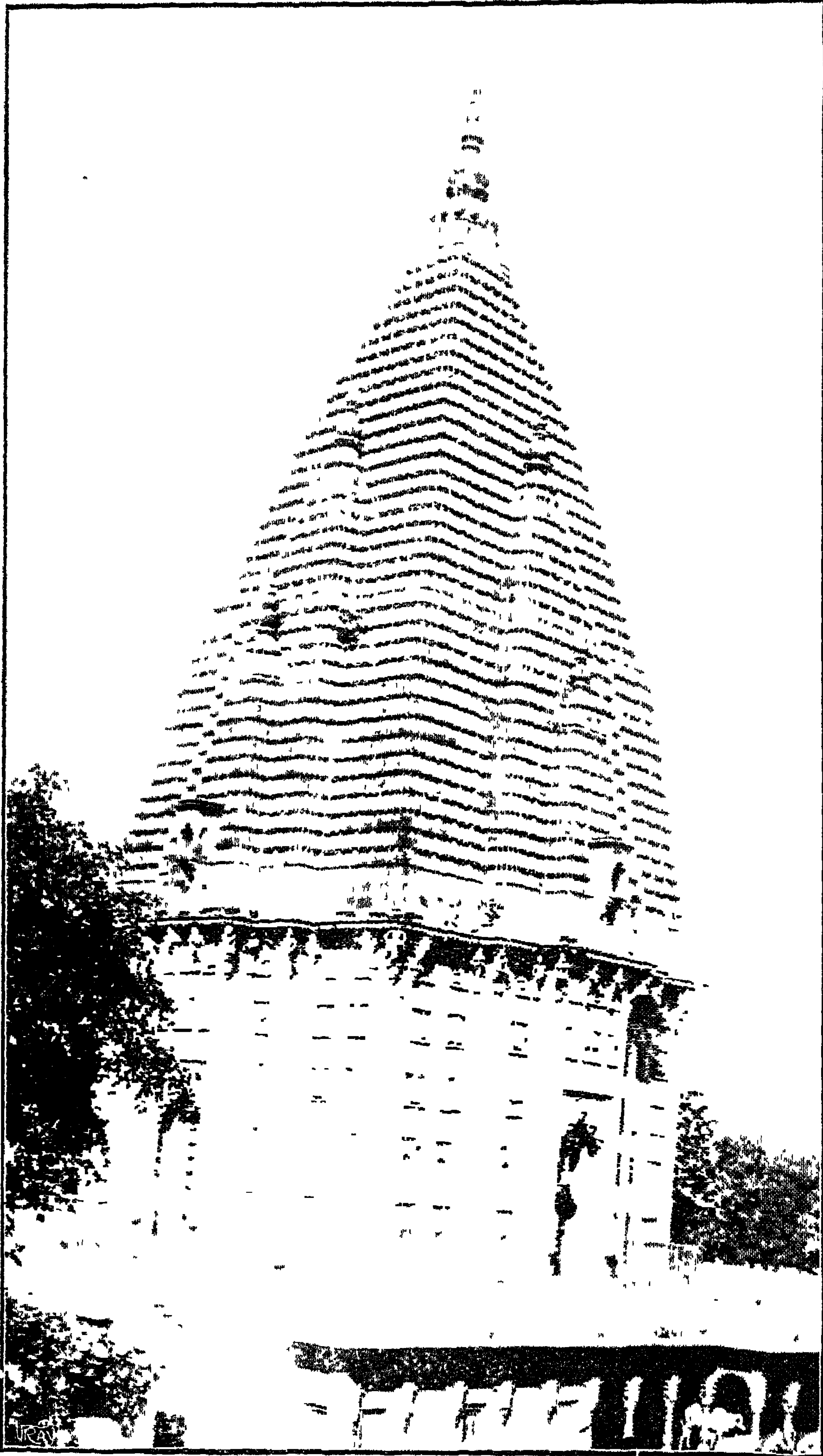
In the south-western part of the city, is the large tank styled *Sûrya Kund*, said to have been erected by a leper named Samba. He also erected at this spot a temple and an image of Surya, in the form of a round flat stone, aud continued to worship for a number of years bathing in the waters of the Surya Kund; when he was ultimately cured of his nasty disease. Hence the importance attached to this locality. A mutilated figure of Ashtanga-Bairav could be seen near the Surya-Kund, said to have been " mutilated by that fierce iconaclast, the Emperor Aurangazeb."

Another place of pilgrimage and one of no small antiquity, is what is known as Nag-kup in the Ausan Ganj Mahalla. which is in the north-western part of the city. The well beneath, which is not very large is surrounded by a space forming the bed of the tank, whose water is reached by a series of steps on the four sides of the square which itself is enclosed by a strong and broad wall, a few feet above the level of the adjoining road, The locality gets the greatest collection of men and women from the city on the 24th and 25th day of Srawan.

While we were on top of the Minaret of Aurangazeb's mosque, we observed the high dome of the Sumêru Mandir, on the Ramnagar side of Benares. The spiral dome which is visible to passengers to Allahabad by the East Indian Railway, until they travel many miles from Moghal Sarai, could be well used as a land mark by passengers at distances of several miles in the vast open expanse.

The magnificence of the Mandir must be seen with one's own eyes to have an exact idea. Even the following photographic illustration, correct as it is, cannot represent the delicacies of carving of the many figures of animals, Dêvas, Rishis, etc., exhibited in bass-relief on the four perpendicular sides of the Mandir. The whole edifice from the base of its foundation to the summit of its tower, is about one hundred feet. There are three distinct portions; a raised platform on which the temple rises, which latter again has four perpendicular faces, one on each side, forming the four stone wallings of the temple within, while it also supports along with the roof over the temple, the spiral dome above ending at a great height in a point.

The four stone faces of the temple which measure about forty feet, are ornamented with several rows of exquisitely carved figures. Each side has five rows, one above the other, of six figures in each, making a total of 120 figures on the four sides of the temple. The row just above the platform represents a series of elephants, the one above containing those of lions on pairs of elephants. The three upper rows contain, various figures of Dêvas, incarnated Gods, Rishis, &c. Amongst others, may be mentioned the following, as having their respective places in the various niches around the four walls of the temple. Krishna and the Gopikas; Brahma Vishnu and Rudra; Ganga, Jumna and Saraswati; Rama, Sita and Hanuman; Bairav and Ganesh, The Sun, the Moon, Vayu, Wind, Agni, Kubera, and Indra; also the image of Kartavirya Arjuna killed by Parasurama, with several vigrahas of Rishis like Narada, Vasishta, Visvamitra, Vyasa, etc. On the southern wall of the temple in the centre of the top-most row of Vighrahas, could be noticed prominently, that of *Durga*, so also, on the eastern wall, could be seen that of Mahakali; whereas, in the northern wall, in one of the niches is a representation of Krishna protecting his people, from a tremendous and destructive rain being poured by the wrathful Indra, by holding above, on one of his small fingers, the Govardhana Giri (the hill of Govardhana).



DURGA'S SUMERU MANDIR-RAMNAGAR K. S. M. & Co.

There are eight gilded representations of the Sun, two being on each face of the tower, while at its very top, it is surmounted by a gilded Chakra, the symbol of *Durga*. Against the three entrances of the temple are placed the three vahanas of the three prominent Dêvas, Durga, Mahadev and Vishnu.

Against the south-door is seated, the faithful Nandi of Siva, while *Garuda* of Sri Vishnu, occupîes the space against the north door, the space against the main entrance having been occupied by the Lion, on which Goddess Durga rides. Peacocks in bass-relief

adorn the top of the main-door-way, their position being very graceful and face to face. The huge and magnificent temple, is, yet, furnished only with small doors, which is overlaid with brass sheets. The interior shrine, not being very spacious, cannot accommodate many worshippers at the same time, yet is clearly visible from outside The image of Durga is of marble furnished with a golden kavacha all over. In a small niche, close by, could be seen the vighrahas of Radha and Krishna. Mahadeva, the Lord of Durga is to her right.

The famous builder of this fine temple, had also erected the equally well designed tank near, furnished with stone flights of steps on its four sides, thereby giving great facility to Pilgrims. The institution of a pilgrimage to Ramnagar in the month of *Maga*, is attributed to *Vyasa*, designed to expunge a bad notion, people then had, regarding the uncertainty of Mukti to such as die on this side of Kâshi. From this date of Vyasa's originating a pilgrimage, the misapprehensions referred to have been removed, and Ramnagar is included in the holy limits of Kashi.

A temple dedicated to Veda Vyasa is in the Maharajah's fort at Ramnagar, being just above the parapet, overlooking the Ganges. The temple is reached from the river by the main stairs descending from the first. On the way up, could be seen, upon the stairs a nice little shrine of Ganga, riding on a crocodile. In an open space above the parapet, as you go to the left on top of the stairs, could be seen a number of shrines dedicated to Mahadeva, and other Gods The temple of Vyasa is located on a platform, in which, not an image of Vyasa, but that of Siva, is worshipped in his name. There is also a carved moorthy of Suryanarayana in this platform, wîth a little moorthy of Ganesh, in a corner.

We should not forget to mention the shrine of Kâsi Devi, located in the Kasipura section, adjoining the Ausanganj Mahalla. In a small temple, under a shady tree, is the Dêvi, (Guardian angel of Benares), who attracts such of the pilgrims as visit all important shrines of the city. The Karnaghanta tank is close to the above, in a quadrangle, in the midst of a garden. At the foot of the steps leading from the garden to the quadrangle, runs a platform, on whose southern side, adjoining the tank, is a famous temple dedicated to the immortal Veda Vyasa. Here, a Moorthy of the Sage himself is adored, unlike what we saw in the Vyasa's temple in the Maharajah's palace. Pilgrims visit this shrine in large numbers, on the month of Sravan.

The temple of Bhuth Bairav, who delivers his worshipper from the evil effects of Bhuth or demon, is a few steps to the north of Kâsi Devi. While we are in its vicinity, let us also mention the temple of Bada Ganesh (the Great Ganesh) which is in a lane, leading from the main road in the Ansanganj Mahalla.

As we have noticed, in the preceding pages, amongst the existing temples, those of great antiquity in Benares, are those of Bridkaleswar, Thrilochaneswar, Adi-Visvéswar, the ruins of old Visveswar Temple since superseded by Aurangazeb's mosque, and those of Jaggeswar and Thillubandeswar. Amongst others, the ruins of Bridkaleswar, have visible signs of considerable age, which the others, except Adi-Visveswar and the ruins of old Visvèswar temple, do not present. Regarding the other temples mentioned here, and several others in the city, the only claim to antiquity being that either the moorthys

therein belong to a very old age, or that the temples which are more modern, are built on very old sites. The absence of magnificent or prominent temples of old, is easily explained by the fact that Kâsi, amongst other sacred cities, had been desecrated hundreds of times, during the interval between the first arrival of Mohamadans in India, to the establishment of British supremacy.



SIVALAYA—IN THE DASASWAMEDH ROAD, CLOSE TO THE GHAT,
BUILT BY, THE LATE MAHARAJAH BAHADUR,
SIR JOTINDRA MOHAN TAGORE, K. C. S. I., OF CALCUTTA.

The Sivalaya of the late Maharajah, Sir, Jotindra Mohan Tagore, at the corner of the broad turning of the Dasaswamedh Road, facing its remaining portion towards the ghat, is really a splendid little structure, of recent date, and is being well maintained by a staff of officers employed for the purpose. It is also known as the *Siva Mutt* signifying, perhaps, that Saivas have an access and an asylum within its holy precincts.

An idea of the Pancha-Thîrtha Yathra, has already been given while dealing with the Ghats on the river-front. The Pancha Thîrthas, referred to are, starting from the central seat of prime importance, viz., Manikarnika, we have the Pancha-Ganga; and Barna Sangam northwards, with Dasaswamedh and Assi Sangam southwards.

The pilgrim on the Pancha Thirtha Yathra, performs his *snana* and Vidhi Purvak Tharpana, at the Manikarnika Pushkarani, proceeds to the Pancha Ganga Ghat close by, where too, he finishes the duties as prescribed, distributing in the two places, due presents to Purohits attending on him. He takes a boat and floats down the river and past the Dufferin Bridge, to the confluence of the Barna with the Ganges, called the Barna Sangam, where, too, after completing the legitimate ceremonies of Snana, Pithri-Tharpana and Deva Puja, he returns, halting at the Dasaswamedh Ghat. Here too, after a bath followed by the observance of the usual ceremonies, he proceeds up the river to Assi Sangam, where he completes the yathra, begun at Manikarnika, having performed the ceremonials, even as he did in the other places.

Thus, the pilgrim had performed the Pancha Thirtha Yathra, by which he had passed through the river front from one end to the other of the limits of Kâsi, having seen all the Ghats and thirthas on the river front.

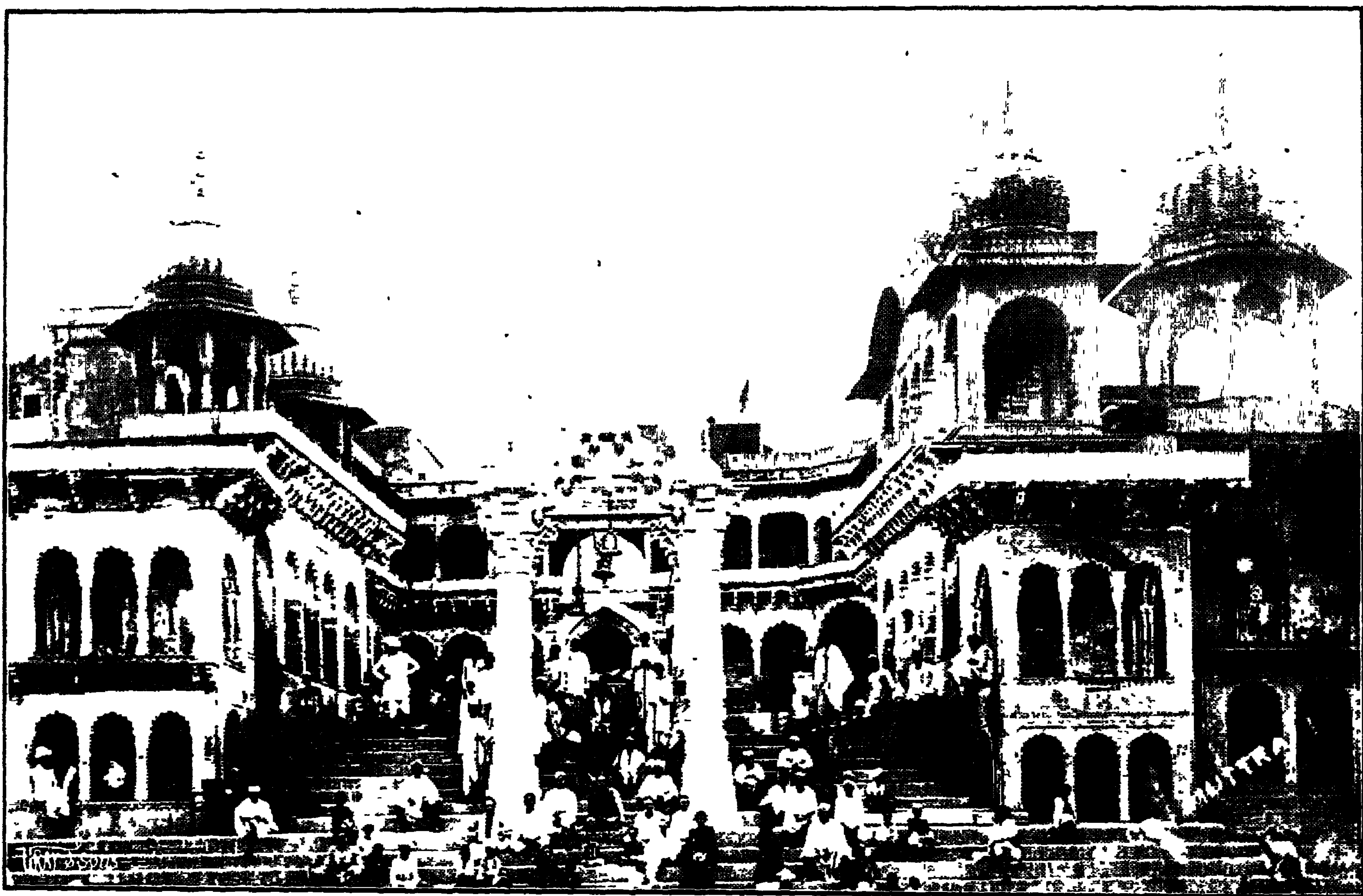
The most prominent of the yathras, enjoined on a pilgrim is that of the Pancha Kôsi. The Pancha Kôsi Road, which is the sacred boundary of Benares, the Holy city, as already noticed in page 74, is about fifty miles long, and it is reckoned to be at a distance of *Pancha Kosi*, or 10 miles, from Manikarnika Pushkarani. It is a road of great antiquity,as demonstrating the practice, from time immemorial, of circumambulating the holy city, with a religious motive. This pilgrimage is equally binding on the Kâsi Vasi (Resident of Kâsi), as it is on the pilgrim who visits the holy place. The pilgrims, as a rule, have to walk the whole distance, halting at various stages, sanctioned by long custom.

Starting from the Manikarnika, and proceeding up the river to the Assi Sangam, the pilgrim crosses the little stream, and wends his path along the narrow avenue, which after passing through a series of barley and paddy fields, widens into a beautiful road, shadowed by huge mangoe trees on both sides. On his way, the pilgrim offers his puja at the way-side shrines,and reaches a village called Khandwa, which is six miles from the Manikarnika. At this place, the pilgrim halts for the remaining portion of the day. There is a temple of a remarkable age, attached to a decently kept tank with stone steps. This temple is one of the few old structures in the city, claiming a date anterior to the first Mahamadan invasion.

During the day following, the pilgrim leaves Khandwa, and marches on, through the shady avenue and endless expanse of fields, till he reaches the village of Dhupchandi, so named after a devi of the same name, having walked eight more miles. On the third day, he walks a longer distance of fourteen miles and halts at Rameswar, which owns a temple dedicated to Rama. Starting from the latter place, he walks on the fourth day, another eight miles and halts at Sheopur, where are a temple of Mahadeva, and a fine tank. The images of Pancha Pandavas set up here belong to a considerable age, as well as that of Surya, worshipped by Draupadi in those days. On the fifth day, the pilgrim walks six miles before he reaches the famous Kapildhara, where after duly performing *Sradha* and *Pinda Pradanams* to the *Pithris*, he halts there for the remaining portion of the day.

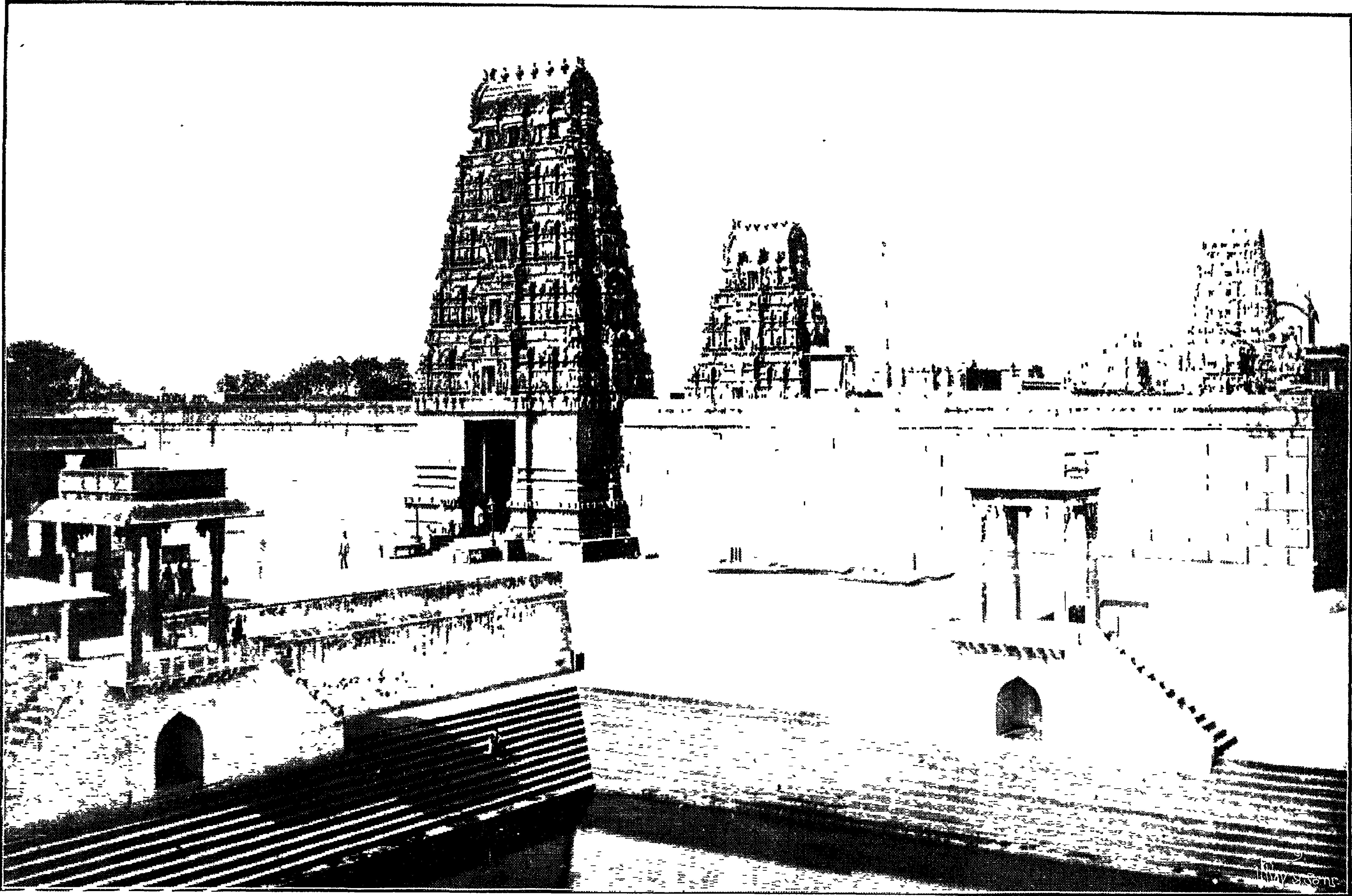
The last stage is reached, when the pilgrim traverses the remaining six miles of the Pancha Kosi Road, and reaches Manikarnika, passing through the Barna Sangam. All the way from Kapildhara to Manikarnika, the pilgrim scatters grains of barley as an oblation to the Dêvas. On reaching the Manikarnika, he takes another bath and after distribution of due *Dhanams* and *Dakshinas* to Brahmins, goes home, with the satisfaction of having performed a meritorious act, but not until he had offered his final *Namaskarams* to Sakshi Vinayak, whose shrine is up above, on the bank, near the Manikarnika.

In the following few pages, ere finishing this chapter about temples and tanks of Káshi, we give a few illustrations of temples and tanks, of three other prominent places of pilgrimage, viz., Mathura and Brindavan in the north-west, and Madura in the extreme south, as they give us sufficient opportunities to compare the narrow, small temples of Northern India, especially those of Kâshi, with the very spacious and huge edifices adorned with grand Gopuras, or towers, of exquisite carving display.



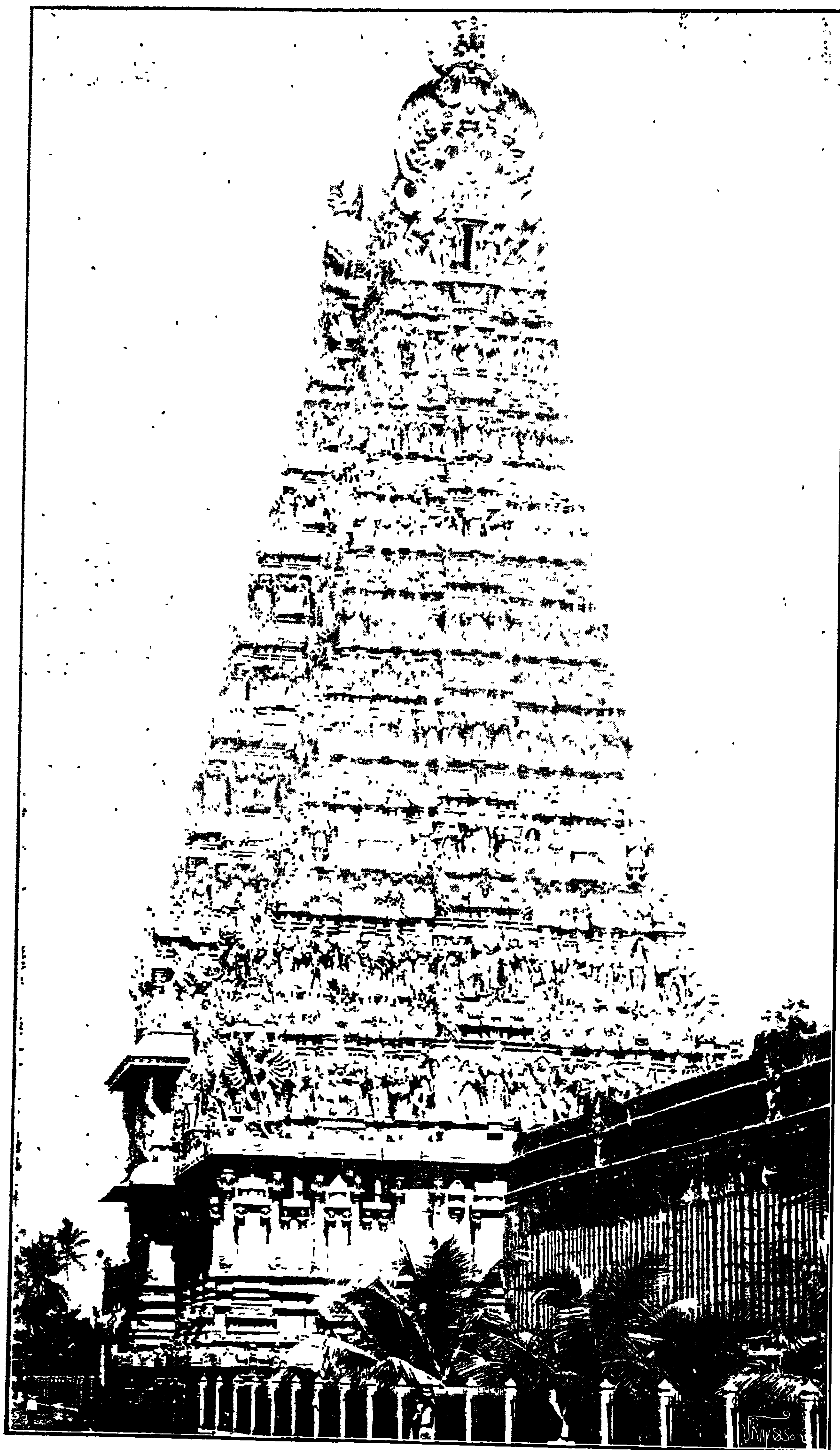
VISRANTH GHAT—MATHURA.

The above illustration which represents an important locality which is the constant resort of streams of devotees on all occasions, viz: the famous 'Visranth Ghat' of Mathura, one of the seven prominent places of pilgrimage. The style and disposition of the various parts of this building is such as to provide great convenience to visitors, as compared to the congested single rooms which form the main shrine in many of the temples of Northern India.



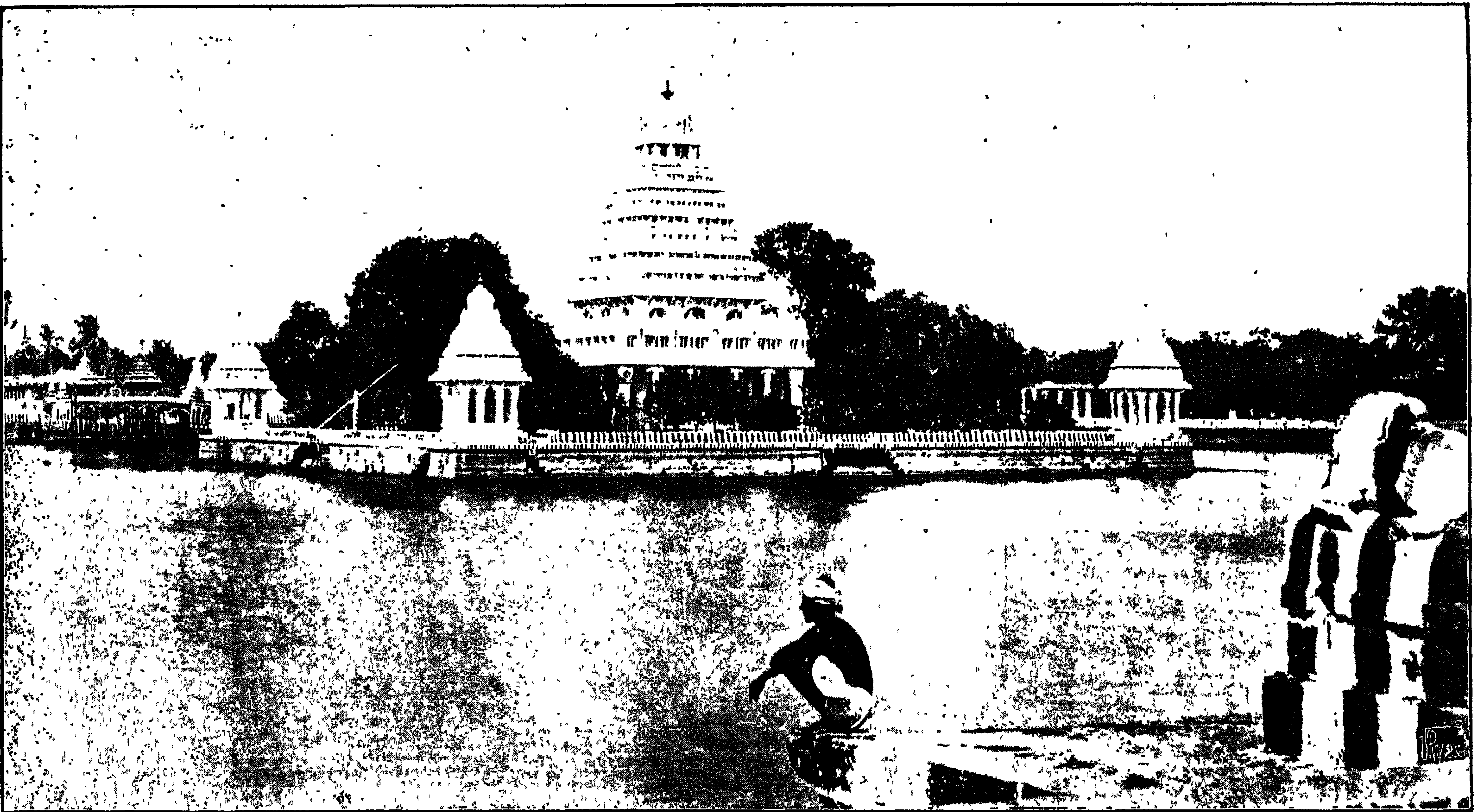
BRINDABAN—RANGANATH'S TEMPLE.

The temple and tank of Rangachari in Brindaban, was built by a Vaishnavite Brahman of Southern India, at a great cost, which was entirely contributed by the various Rajahs, and Maharajahs, who have accepted him as their family guru or priest. A descendent of the family still represents the Mutt, established by the founder, and is very much respected by all those attached to the creed.



THE EASTERN TOWER OF MEENATCHI'S TEMPLE MADURA.

This illustration represents, one and the highest of the four towers of the splendid temple of Meenakshi Dêvi and Sundarêswar, otherwise known as *Dakshin Kailas*. This rich temple adorns Madura the capital of the ancient Pandyas, on the way to Rameswaram and as such, it is the most endeared to the whole continent of India. The continuing high outermost wall of the temple is seen touching about the centre of the tower from its base. The low enclosure opposite the high wall on the four sides of the temple, encompasses a series of fine green gardens, which add greatly to the beauty of the exterior view. There are several prakaras one within the other, until we get to the innermost shrines of the predominent Dêvis and Dêvas.

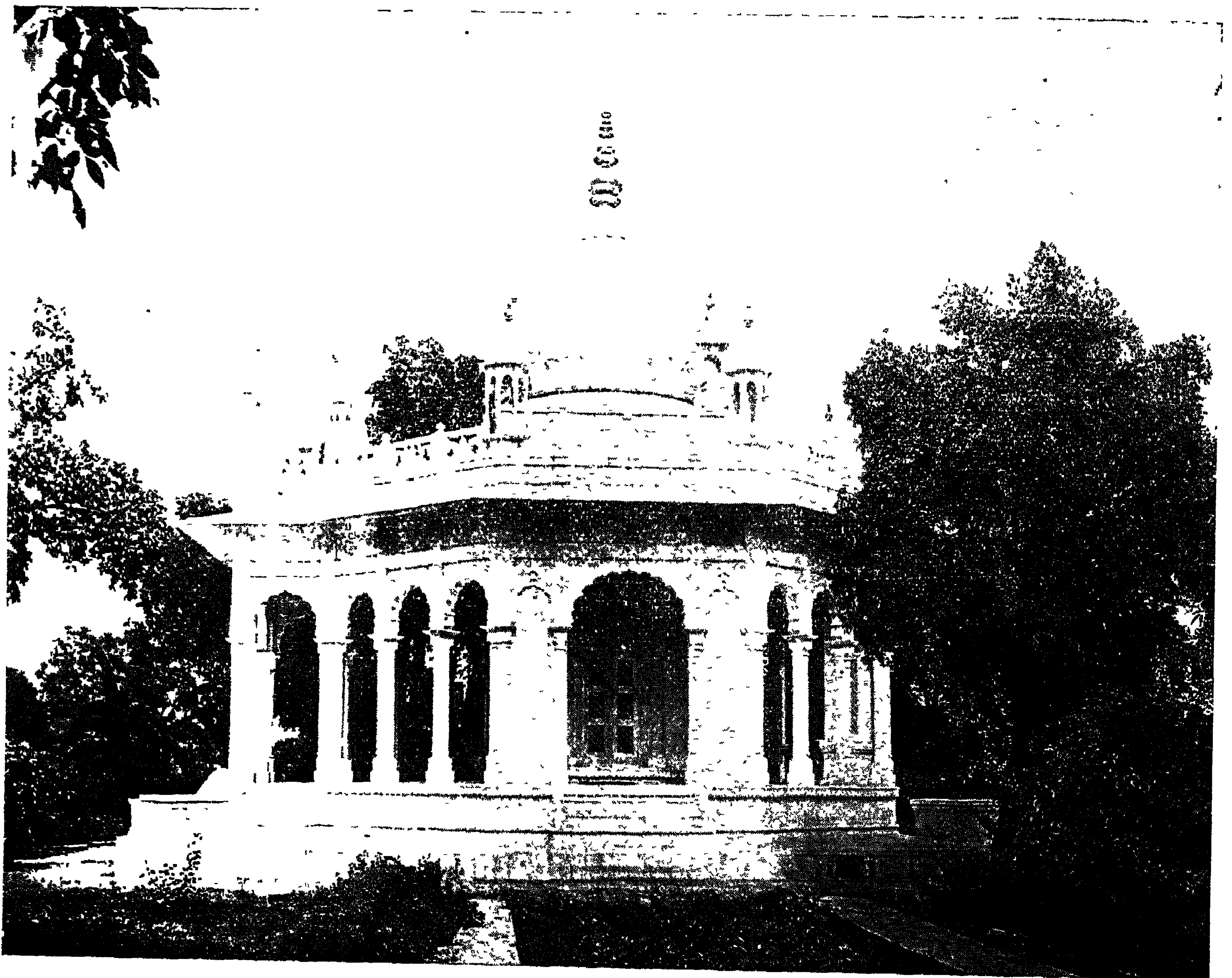


THE (VANDOOR) TEPPAKULUM, MADURA

The large tank and temple within, exhibit the very famous tank, styled (Vandoor Teppakulam), which lies magestically. three or four miles to the east of the City of Madura, on the road to Rameswaram. It is yet, in the suburbs of the City, and its large area of about two miles round, is surrounded by a very broad and well-metalled Municipal Road, from which rise on the four sides, magnificent Palaces of rich Rajahs and Zemindars of the locality.

The tank has a low stone walling on its four sides, intersected at intervals by commodious landing ghats, and provided with an inner one-yard broad, stone-paved walk, throughout, its length. The central island which occupies a good area within the square tank, is embelished, amidst excellent groves of mangoes, jack, cocoanut and other fruit trees, besides innumerable flower plants, with towering Gopuras, a very high one being in the centre with smaller ones on the corners.

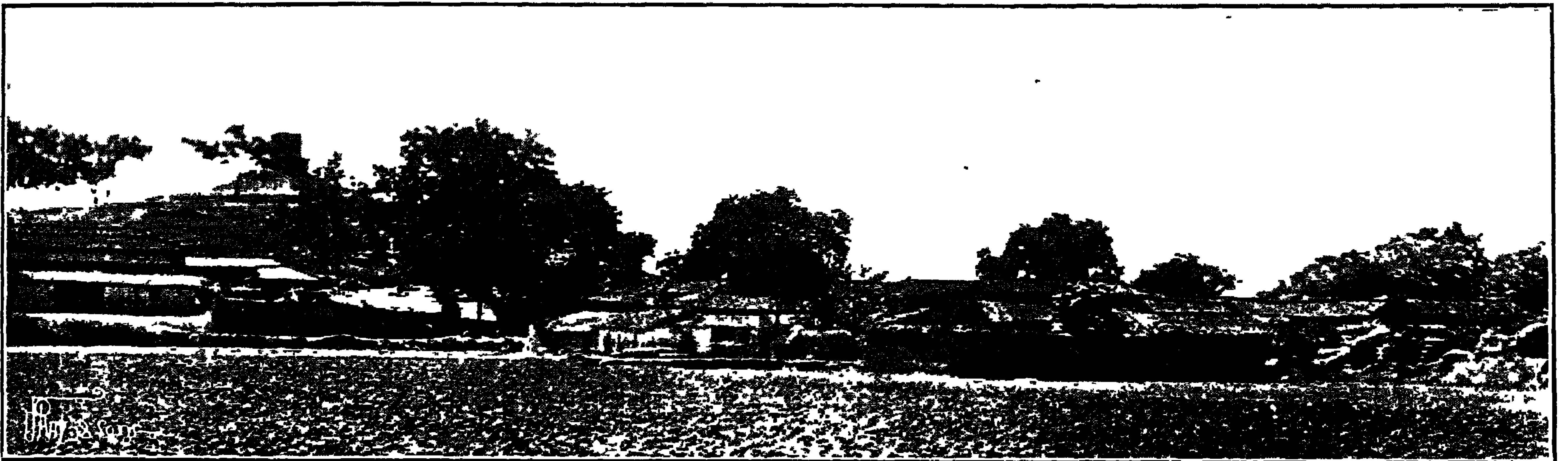
The festival boats (special highly decorated boats constructed for festivals of Sundarêswar and Meenatchy, during the months of January), are lying in anchor to the extreme left. These jolly barges with the Dêvas, are towed around the tank several times, attended by music, etc. This festival attracts a very large collection of people which varies from twenty to fifty thousand.



BHASKARANAND SWAMI'S SAMADHI—NEAR DURGA'S TEMPLE.

CHAPTER V.

BUDDHIST RUINS IN SARANATH AND ELSEWHERE IN KASHI.



ON THE ROAD TO SARANATH. K. S. M. & Co.

Reference to Saranath, the Buddhist part of Benares of the Medieval period, has already been made in the earlier chapters of this book dealing with Buddhism. Saranath, (" Deer-Park ") or *Rishi Pattana* was, in the early days preceding the advent of Gautama Sakhya Sinha, as Buddha the Enlightened, the constant resort, on account of its rare solitude and unique advantages, of Thapasvis, Sages, and Philosophers, with whom the then, age was so full. The five disciples of Gautama, of the Uruvela forest, near Chitrakuta, on the eastern off-shoots of the Vindyas repaired into Saranath, when they failed to derive any benefit from the six years penance of Gautama, during which long period, they had apprenticed him. Gautama himself, when he went to Benares, actually proceeded to this spot, where only he started his first expositions of his grand new revelations. In the subsequent literature of the Buddhists, Saranath, necessarily takes a very prominent part, as the centre, wherefrom the Lord Buddha, expounded his religion.

In one of the later Buddhistic books, (Nigrodha Miga Jataka) it is said, that Buddha, as a *Bodhi Sathwa*, was master of all the forests of Deer, which was being frequently hunted by the then sportful Raja of Benares Feeling compassion for the poor deer, which were being mercilessly slaughtered by the Raja, *the Bodhi Sathwa.* interceded on behalf of the innocent deer and stopped the Raja from regular hunting, though he had to give one deer each day for the Rajah's table After a while, it so happened, that, when the turn of a hind, big with young, came, she represented to him, the future Buddha, the impropriety of offering her. on account of her pregnancy; upon which the *Bodhi Sathwa* himself presented before the Raja, in place of the hind, under the circumstances When the good Raja of Benares, heard the story of the hind, big with young, and the offer instead of *Bodhi Sathwa*, in sacrifice, according to the arrangement, gave up his claim, out of pity, and restored the deer-park, to the free use of the deer and its master, without any more infringing on its rights Hence, the name Deer-park to this secluded locality, which had, from time immemorial, sheltered many an ancient sage and philosopher ere finally accommodating the spacious Viharas of thousands of Buddhistic Monks, Stupas and other monuments, which later Budhists of repute erected on the hallowed area, to commemorate the memory of Buddha and his immortal teachings

In fact, every locality of this famous Saranath, had been sanctified by hundreds of Buddhists of later centuries, by the erection of many a viharas, sacred tanks, stupas, and other monuments, chief of them, being those erected by Asoka and other pronounced Royal supporters of this off-shoot of Hinduism. But for the trust-worthy accounts left by the famous Chinese pilgrims, Fa Hian and Hiouen Thsaing of the fifth and later centuries of the Christian era, we would be entirely in the dark, as to what splendid structures adorned this sacred locality, during the early and later growth of Buddhism in the land.

With a view to give an idea of the various structures, that existed in Saranath and elsewhere, when the above mentioned reputed Chinese Missionaries travelled in the country, we give, in the following pages, an abstract of their own records.

On reaching the city of " Pho lo nai (Benares), in the kingdom of Kia-chi (Kasi)," Fa Hian, proceeded, " ten *lis* to the north-east of the city," ere he arrived at the "Park of the Immortals' Deer. This Park was, of yore, the abode of a Py tchi foe (Pretyeka Buddha): deer constantly repose in it. When the Honourable of the Age was on the point of accomplishing the law, the gods sang, in the midst of the enclosure, 'The son of King Pe tsing (Suddhodana) has embraced a religious life; he has studied the doctrine; and, in seven days, he will become foe.' The Pe, tchi foe having heard this. assumed *Ni Houan* (*Nirvana*). It is on this account that this place is called the Garden of the Plain of the Immortal's Deer. Since the time when the Honourable of the age accomplished the law, the men of later ages have constructed a chapel in this place.

" Foê, desiring to convert, from among the five men, Keon Lin (Kaundinya), these five men said among themselves " For six years this Cha men (Sramana) Kin tan (Gautama) has practiced austerities; eating, daily, only one hemp-seed and one grain of

rice; and he has not yet been able to attain the law. *A fortiori*, when one lives in the society of men, and gives one's self up to one's body, mouth, and thoughts, how could one accomplish the doctrine? When he comes to-day, let us be careful not to speak to him. When Foe drew near, the five men rose. and did homage to him"

"Sixty paces to the north of this spot, Foe, facing the east sate down, began, to turn the Wheel of the Law. From among the five men, he converted Keon Lin (Kaundinya), twenty paces to the north is the spot where Foe re-counted his history to Mi le (Maitreya). Fifty paces thence, to the south, is the place where the dragon I lo po asked Foe; 'In what space of time shall I be able to obtain deliverance from this dragon's body? At all these spots they have raised towers, among which are two Seng-kien len (Sangharama, or monasteries), in which are devotees."—Extracted from Rev. Sherring's 'Sacred city of the Hindus'. Appendix A.

Hiouen Thsaing, who travelled in India about 250 years after Fa Hian, had left a more copious record. He found a greater portion of the people of Kâshi, observing Hinduism, while only a few were followers of Buddhism. He found, in the whole kingdom of Kâshi, about thirty Buddhist *Viharas*, accomodating about three thousand monks following the Minor Vehicle; while about a thousand Hindu temples and ten thousands of Hindus, were followers of Siva, in the Province. The brass statue of Mâhêswara, that Hiouen Thsaing saw in Benares was about a hundred feet in height, being very grave and majestic in appearance.

There was a hundred feet *stupa* of Asoka marking the spot where five hundred Pratyeka Buddhas attained *Nirvana*, and a blue stone Monolith next to it, shining with reflections of "the Tathagata," a few yards west-ward from the Ganges.

Hiouen Thsaing found in Saranath which was about ten *lis*, in a north-easterly direction from the river, a large Buddhist high-walled monastery. in eight sections. One of its many *Viharas*, rose from the centre, on stone foundations, with brick superstructure, to a height of about two hundred feet, beautifully displaying several images of Buddha, in its many niches, one above the other, with a crowning "*An-mo-lo* (Amra or mango)." A life-size brass statue of Buddha, in the act of preaching or "turning 'the wheel of the Law" adorned the inner shrine. There was another *stupa*, to its south-west, of stone, erected by Aoska, with an elevation, over-ground of about a hundred feet, with a shining Monolith, also of Asoka, close by, which divined the good or bad actions of observers thereon. It is said, that the Monolith marked the identical spot where Buddha, the Enlightened, turned "the wheel of the Law,' for the first time, in Saranath, while the stone *stupa* signified the spot whereto *Kaundinya* and the four other disciples of Gautama, of Uruvela forest, retired, to meditate on the Parabrahmam.

There were also three other important sites, in Saranath, where three last Buddhas stayed, which have been sanctified by the erection, on their respective spots, of as many *stupas*. The place where Maitreya Bodhisatwa, one of the five disciples of Gautama heard the prediction of the Devas, that he would attain *Nirvana*, was also

signified by the erection of a similar monument. Another *stupa*, to the west of Maitreya's above mentioned, marks the sacred locality, where, "Kia-ye-po-fo (Kasyapa Buddha) heard, in olden days, a prediction that, in future ages, Gautama Sakhya Sinha, would attain Buddhahood and teach his enlightened law to the world. To the south of the above last mentioned stupa, were four 'stone seats,' didicated to signify the respective places, where the four last Buddhas walked for exercise." They were huge "blue stones," being about "fifty paces in length and seven feet in height." A huge statue of Buddha, in walking attitude, and with graceful appearance, stands in this locality.

There were, besides, several other monuments within the spacious Monastery, already mentioned, while beyond its walls, there were three large tanks, which were held sacred, since they were used by "the Tathagata", for bathing, washing of garments and of utensils, respectively. A large square stone in the vicinity, said to have been used by Buddha, for drying his *Kashaya Vasthras*, was also held very sacred by the followers of Buddha.

There were several other *stupas*, erected by the Buddhistic Devotees, in later times, marking the various sites where Buddha, as Bodhisathwa, had committed meritorious deeds There was a stupa to mark the place where the Bodhi Sathwa, as a "six-tusked elephant," "tore out his tusks" to present them to the hunter in Kashayavasthra. There was another which proclaimed his glorious act of teaching to the world, as a Bodhisathwa the good effects of respecting the aged and the learned. A third one indicated the memorable spot, where, the Bodhisathwa settled the future protection of the deer, whose charge he had, in conjunction with Deva Datta, in a previous existence In fact, every place, associated with the golden deeds of Buddha were sanctified, by appropriate monuments erected.

About half a mile to the south-west of the Saranath Monastery, stood a huge *stupa* of three hundred feet, said to contain "the most rare and precious materials." Without any ornamental niches with Buddhas, it had "on its summit, a kind of devotee's water pot inverted" There was also a small stupa, at its side, marking the spot, wherefrom Kaundinya and others "departed from their compact (not to accost, Buddha) and advanced to meet Buddha" A representation of its present ruins, now styled, Humayun's tower may be seen on page 33.

Out of so many buildings, *viharas* and *stupas* that Hiouen Thsaing saw, in the Buddhist city of Saranath, towards the middle of the sixth century after Christ, we now have only one huge *stupa* in more or lesss repairable condition, called, the Dhamek Tower, and the ruins of the three hundred feet *stupa*, that was said to have existed about half a mile, south-west of Saranath, now known as 'Chakhandi' or 'Humayun's Tower' already spoken of.

It is doubtful, for how long, the Buddhist city of Saranath flourished, after Hiouen Thsaing's visit, for, no trust-worthy records are available of the subsequent period. It is highly probable that for the first time, and along with the fate of her main city, Benares proper, she too, experienced the iron hands of the Mohamadan invaders of

the twelfth century. The above assumption is confirmed by the subsequent evidence, gathered from the monuments and inscriptions un-earthed, in later centuries. by archæologists. It is asserted that the earliest Mohamadan invaders, under Qutb-ud-din Aibak, devasted Saranath as well, when they destroyed Benares in 1194 A. D. " For the condition of the excavated ruins," says Mr. H R. Nevill. in his District Gazetteer of Benares," proves that a violent catastrophe, accompanied by wilful destruction and plunder, overtook the place," when, the many Viharas, Stupas and other valuable monuments that adorned Saranath, were thus converted into an uninhabitable heap of debris, the probability being that those monks and other devotees of the creed who inhabited them before the incident, repaired to adjoining or other accommodations in Benares or elsewhere. At any rate, we can safely assume that Saranath was completely deserted, at least, when Buddhism disappeared in the land of its origin.

The only mention we have of Saranath, in later centuries, was in connection with the digging for bricks by Jagat Singh's (a Diwan of Raja Cheit Singh) men and the finding of valuable treasures, in a treasure chamber of one of the stupas in ruins. A green marble casket, with a few charred bones, pearls, rubies, and gold leaves got into the hands of Jonathan Duncan, the capable Resident of Benares.

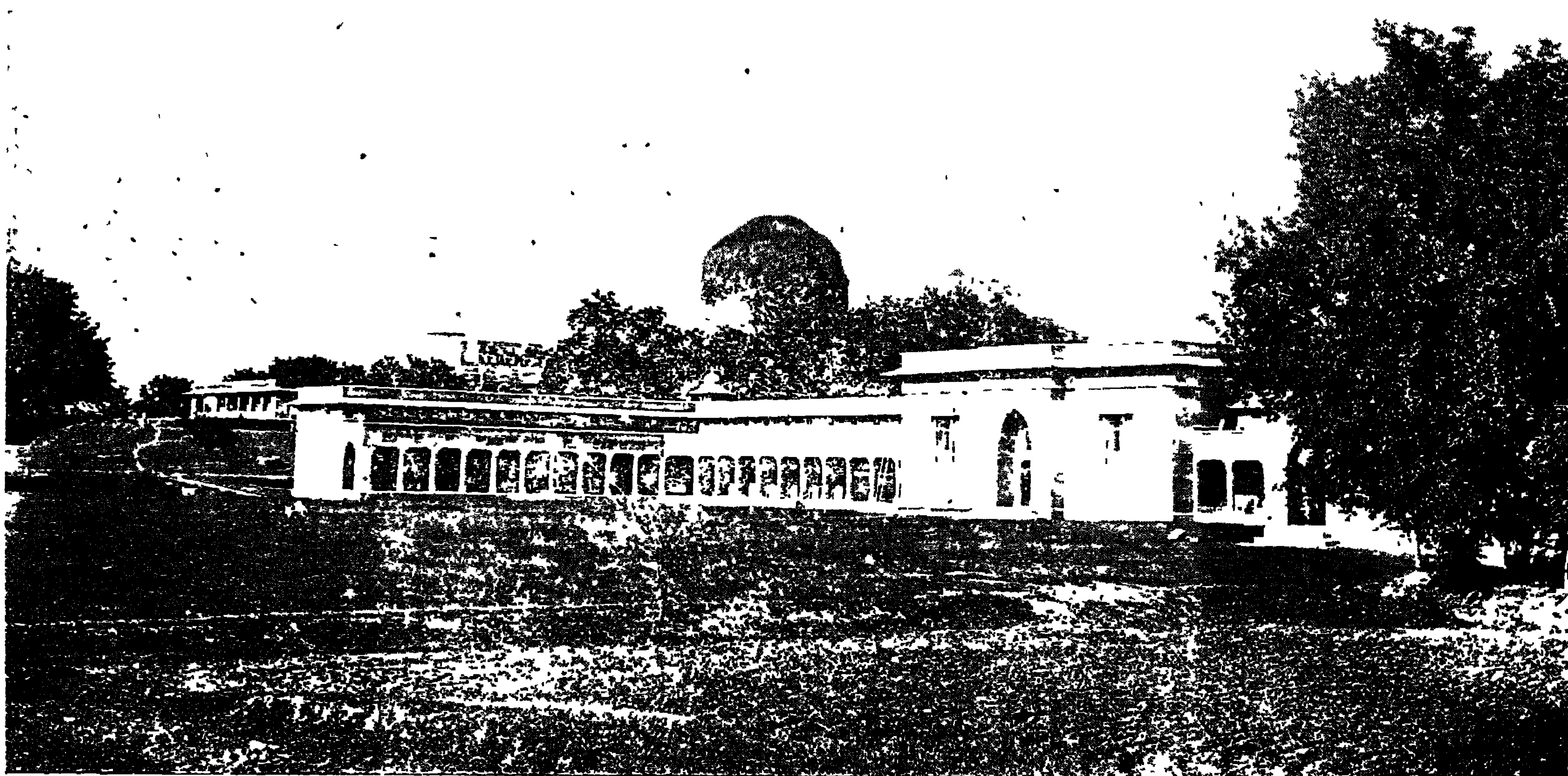
Several discoveries were made in subsequent excavations conducted by Col. C. Mackenzie in 1815, Sir Alexander Cunningham, in 1835 and Major Kittoe, the Archæological Engineer to Government, about 1847.

" Unfortunately for Archæology Major Kittoe died before publishing an account of his discoveries, and all his notes and memoranda have been lost, though a very large volume of his drawing is still extant in the India Office Library. Much of the stone work excavated by Major Kittoe was used by him in the erection of the Queen's College at Benares, but all the more important sculptures and carvings were collected together at the College, whence they were afterwards transferred to the Lucknow Provincial Museum or returned to Saranath. Major Kittoe's excavations of the monastery west of the Jain temple were resumed in 1853 by Mr. E. Thomas, and afterwards by Dr. F. Hall of Queen's College, who collected numerous sculptures and small objects, a number of which are to be found at the Saranath museum, Dr. Butter obtained permission to continue Dr. Hall's work. but if he did so, no account of his operations survives. About 1865, Mr. C, Horne did some vicarious digging at Saranath and sent his finds to the Indian Museum, Calcutta. Lastly we hear of Mr. Rivett-Caruac digging up a Buddah image at Saranath in 1877, but what became of it is not known."

" Apart from the portable antiquities which found their way into museums, practically all the monuments unearthed during the excavations described above, which might have proved of such exceptional interest now, were soon destroyed for the sake of the materials they furnished, or allowed to crumble to ruin, the whole site quickly becoming a chaos in which it was well-nigh impossible to distinguish what had been excavated from what had not, and the only records left to us are the bare and often quite inadequate descriptions of some of the explorers. This was the condition of things until 1905, when the Archæological department, decided to clear up the site finally, preserving

effectually all that there might be found to preserve *in situ*, and collecting into a local museum, which is being built for the purpose, all the sculptures and other movable antiquities. The operations of the Archæological department, which are still in progress and which represent the first real attempt to excavate the ruins on systematic and scientific lines, were at first carried on through Mr. F. O. Oertel, of the Public Works Department, to whom the chief credit for the subsequent discoveries must be assigned, but have since been directly supervised by Mr. J. H. Marshall with the co-operation of Dr. Sten Konow and Mr. W. H. Nicholls "—District Gazetteer, Vol xxvi.

A very large area had been explored by deep excavations as noticed above, and the place, which originally presented such a magnificent scenery, to Hiouen Thsaing, is now only a heap of ruins. We shall now give a brief description of what is now visible as remains of the once famous Saranath.



RUINS OF SARANATH—THE NEW MUSEUM IN THE FORE-GROUND, K. S. M. & Co.

The illustration above represents the only remaining tower, styled "Dhamek Tower" which stands on a high mound, at the back-ground. The low building in the fore-ground is the new Museum, almost completed, and, contains a goodly collection of valuable relics extracted during the previous years, out of the vast expanse of ruins of the ancient Saranath.

The tiny tower to the right, surmounts a modern temple of the Jains. The low building in front of it, illustrated on page 132, and to the extreme right, up in the high mound, is a part of the museum where-in, also are stored a very valuable collection of sculptural beauties of some of the ruins excavated. The Museum itself is a very substantial stone structure and will well locate to advantage the famous remains of Buddhistic glory. Though, only with a ground floor, at present, it has spacious halls left apart for the storage of the relics, besides providing commodious rooms for office or other purpose.

Of the hundreds of valuable relics that the Archæological department have collected within the grand structure of the New Museum, we shall speak at least, of a few, which captivate the attention of the visitors, with genuine attractions. The most prominent and the one exhibited, in the foreground, just opposite the main entrance of the Museum, is the magnificient Lion Capital. "The Capital which measures seven feet high, is of the Persepolitan bell-shaped type, surmounted by four magnificent lions sitting back to back with a wheel between them symbolising the law of the Buddha which was first promulgated at Saranath. Beneath the lion is a drum ornamented with four animals, in relief, viz., a lion, an elephant, a bull, and a horse, seperated from each other by four wheels. The four crowning Lions and the reliefs below are wonderfully vigorous and true to nature, and are treated with that simplicity and reserve which is the keynote of all great masterpieces of plastic art. India certainly has produced no other sculpture to equal them." (District Gazetteer Vol. xxvi)



LION CAPITAL OF ASOKKA'S PILLAR FOUND IN SARANATH. AND PRESERVED IN THE NEW MUSEUM AT SARANATH. K. S M. & Co.,

This excellent Lion Capital formed the crown of a huge Monolith of Asoka, erected to the west of the 'Main Shrine' of the famous Buddhist Sangarama, spoken of already. The Capital and a broken piece of the fine Monolith, were excavated in the locality above-mentioned, where a portion of the column is still to be found. As is clearly visible, the nice pillar had been violently battered down by the mischievous Mohamadans while destroying Saranath. The portion of the pillar in existence, measures sixteen feet eight inches by two feet and six inches in diameter at the bottom. Roughly calculating the length of the broken shafts with the capital, we may gather that the Monolith originally measured about fifty feet. The column itself is of sand-stone, but its true

nature could not be at once judged, for the surface is so highly polished that it resembles granite rather than sand-stone. This Monolith was set up by Emperor Asoka, to caution the inmates of the Monastery that, should any of them were to create schisms in the Sangha, such would be expelled from within, and forcedto live outside with a white garment, instead of the Kashaya. The pillar also bears two small Kushan Epigrahs. The next attractive relic is a life-size image of Buddah, in the act of preaching, against the wall, just behind the Lion Capital. To get an idea of the ease and magnificence displayed therein, we refer our readers to page 22, where an illustration of a similar image of Buddha is given.

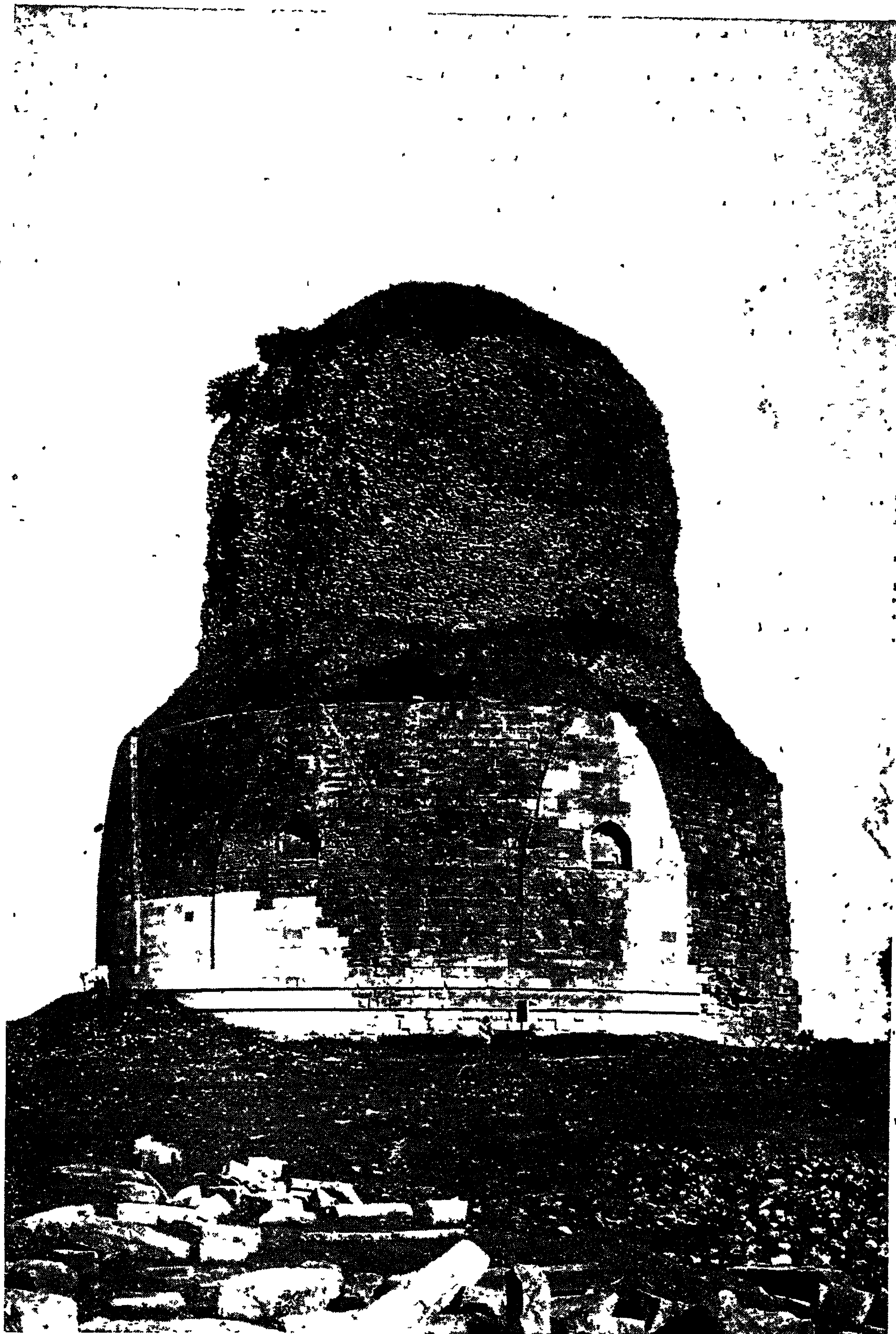
Other huge and striking figures and other relics in the front hall are, two large stone umbrellas of about 8 and 10 feet diameter; a large size mutilated statue (head off) in a walking attitude, which we doubt may be the walking Buddha referred to already near the place where the four last Buddh as took exercise; and a very huge (about 10 to 12 feet) unfinished image of Siva, presenting a side view in a very attractive manner. There were, besides several bass-reliefs, all dug out of the ruins at Saranath. The Museum is not yet open to the public. The collection is really worth the beautiful and spacious structure. Perhaps, were the Government to order the restoration to this Museum, all the other relics of Saranath, carried away in the earlier years, to museums in Lucknow and Calcutta, it would be a great source of attraction to visitors, while providing at a glance, the chance of perceiving all the excavated relics of Saranath, in one place so admirably suited, as the new Museum, in Saranath itself.



A MUSEUM OF VALUABLE RELICS, IN FRONT OF THE JAIN TEMPLE, SARANATH.

The illustration on the previous page represents a section of the extra edifice or colonade (mandapam) on the high mound adjoining the Jain temple, wherein also are deposited a good collection of several images, mutilated or otherwise, (of Hindu Deities.)

The Dhamek Tower which stands a little to the north-east of the Jain Temple, is about a hundred and fifty feet, including its foundations. Its stone basement is about ninety-three feet in dia-meter, and encircles the tower up to a height of about forty-three feet, wherefrom, the plain brick-work continues to a height of a hundred and four feet. "Externally," Mr. H. R. Nevill observes in his District Gazettier vol. xxvi, "the lower part is relieved by eight projecting faces, each twenty-one feet six inches wide and fifteen feet apart. In each is a small niche, intended apparently, to contain an image, and below them, encircling the monument, is a band of sculptured ornament of the most exquisite beauty. The central part of this band consists of geometric patterns of great intricacy, but combined with singular skill, while above and below are rich floral arabesques, the whole being peculiarly charecteristic of the art of the imperial Guptas. The carvings round the niches and in the projections have been left unfinished, and judging by the absence of any fragments, either in stone or brick or plaster around, the stupa, it seems not improbable that the upper part of the tower was never completed."



SARANATH—DHAMEK TOWER, K. S. M. & Co.

Major-General Cunnigham, says that "the lower part of the tower, to a height of forty-three feet, is built entirely of stone from one of the Chunar quarries; and, with the exception of the upper courses, the whole of this part of the building is a solid mass of stone; and each stone, even in the very heart of the mass, is secured to its neighbours by iron clamps. The upper part of the tower is built entirely of large bricks; but, as the outer-facing has long ago disappeared, there is nothing now left to show whether it was formerly cased with stone, or only plastered over, and coloured to imitate the stone work of the lower portion. I infer, however, that it was plastered; because the existing stone-work terminates with the same course all round the building, a length of two hundred and ninety two feet. Had the upper part been cased with stone, it is scarcely possible that the whole should have disappeared so completely, that not even a single block out of so many thousands should not remain in its orignal position."

" Around the niches, seven of the faces are more or less richly decorated with a profusion of flowering foliage. The carving on some of the faces has been completed; but on others it is little more than half finished, while the south face is altogether plain. On the unfinished faces, portions of the unexecuted ornamentation may be seen traced in outline by the chisel, which proves that in ancient times. the Hindus followed the same practise, as at present, of adding the carving after the wall was built "

' On the western face, the same ornamentation of flowing foliage is continued below the niche, and, in the midst of it, there is a small plain tablet, which can only have been intended for a very short inscription, such, perhaps, as the name of the building. A triple band of ornament, nearly nine feet in depth below the niches, encircles all the rest of the building, both faces and recesses. The middle band, which is the broadest, is formed entirely of various geometrical figures, the main line being deeply cut, and the intervening spaces being filled with various ornaments. On some of the faces, where the spaces between the deeply cut lines of the ruling figures are left plain, I infer that the work is unfinished, The upper band of ornamentation, which is the narrowest, is generally, a scroll of the lotus plant, with leaves and buds only, while the lower band, which is also a lotus scroll, contains the full-blown flowers, as well as the buds. The lotus flower is represented full to the front, on all the sides except the south south west, where it is shown in a side view with the *Chakwa* or Brahmani Goose seated upon it. This, indeed, is the only side on which any animal representations are given; which is the more remarkable, as it is one of the recesses, and not one of the projecting faces. In the middle of the ornament there is a human figure seated on a lotus flower and holding two branches of the lotus in his hands. On each side of him, there are three lotus flowers of which the four nearer ones support pairs of Brahmini geese; while the two farther ones carry only single birds Over the nearest pair of geese, on the right hand of the figure, there is a frog. The attitude of the birds are all good; and even that of the human figure is easy although formal. The lotus scroll, with its flowing line of graceful stalk, mingled with tender buds, and full-blown flowers, and delicate leaves, is very rich and very beautiful. Below the ornamental borders there are three plain projecting bands."

" The breadth of one projecting face and of one recess is thirty-six feet six inches, which, multiplied by eight, gives two hundred and ninety-two feet as the circumference, and a trifle less than ninety-three feet as the diameter."—Major-General Cunningham.

During his laborious examination of the Dhamek Tower, Major-General Cunningham was able to satisfy himself, by " sinking a shaft or well about five feet in diameter," to a ' depth of one hundered and ten feet from the top of the monument,' that the massive stone work above referred to, ' gave place to brick-work made of very large bricks.' He also fixes the age of this tower to the later Buddhistic period.

The other surviving tower of the many, that were seen by Hionen Thsaing, is the one already referred to as the ' Chaukhandi,' or ' Humayun's tower? It is also called as 'Lori-ki-Kudan,' or 'Lori's Leap,' since a Hindu of the name of Lori is said to have leaped down and died falling from its top. There is evidence enough to believe that this is the identical tower described by the Chinese Traveller, as about three hundred feet in height, situated in a south-westerly direction from the monastery and big Stupas of Saranath.

We have already mentioned that Buddhism prospered more by the ardent support given by Asoka who flourished about the third century before Christ. As manifestations of his great zeal for Buddhism, he, in addition to spreading the religion in other lands by equally capacious and ardent missionaries, also established his royal connection with the religion, by the erection of several Viharas, topes or towers, and massive stone pillars (monoliths), whereon he inscribed the sacred edicts of the creeds, for their propagation to the mass; such edicts were also engraved on many rocks in various parts of the country.

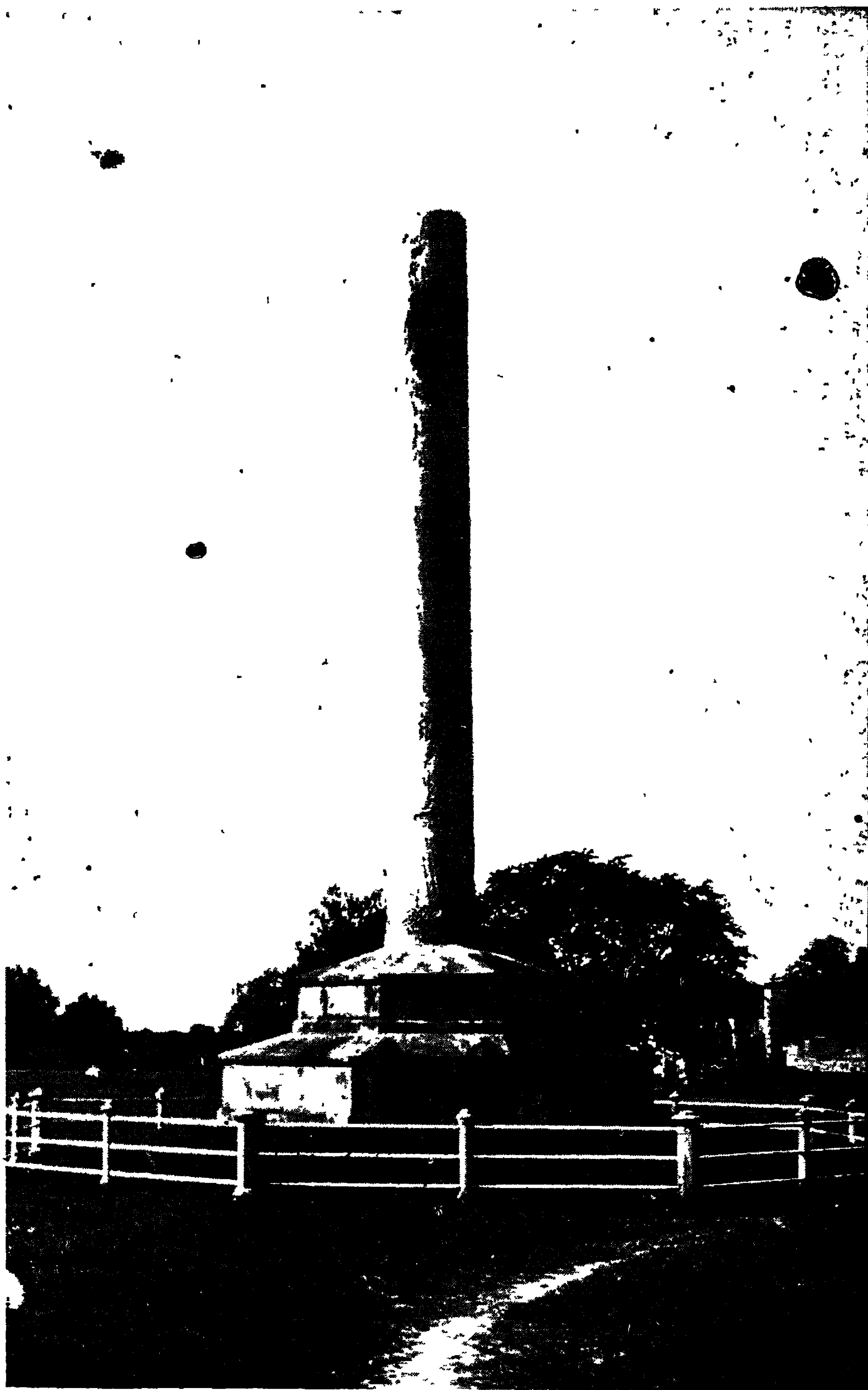
The illustration on the following page, is of one of such Monoliths of Asoka, now preserved in the spacious grounds, of the Government College of Benares, styled, The Queen's College.

To the north of the college buidings, a few yards off, may be seen this Monolith, which was discovered near Ghzeepore. Under the orders of the late Mr. Thomason, the then Lieut -Governor of the United Provinces, it was brought from Gazeepore, and erected here over an octagonal broad substantial base, the whole expense having been met by the said Mr. Thomason himself.

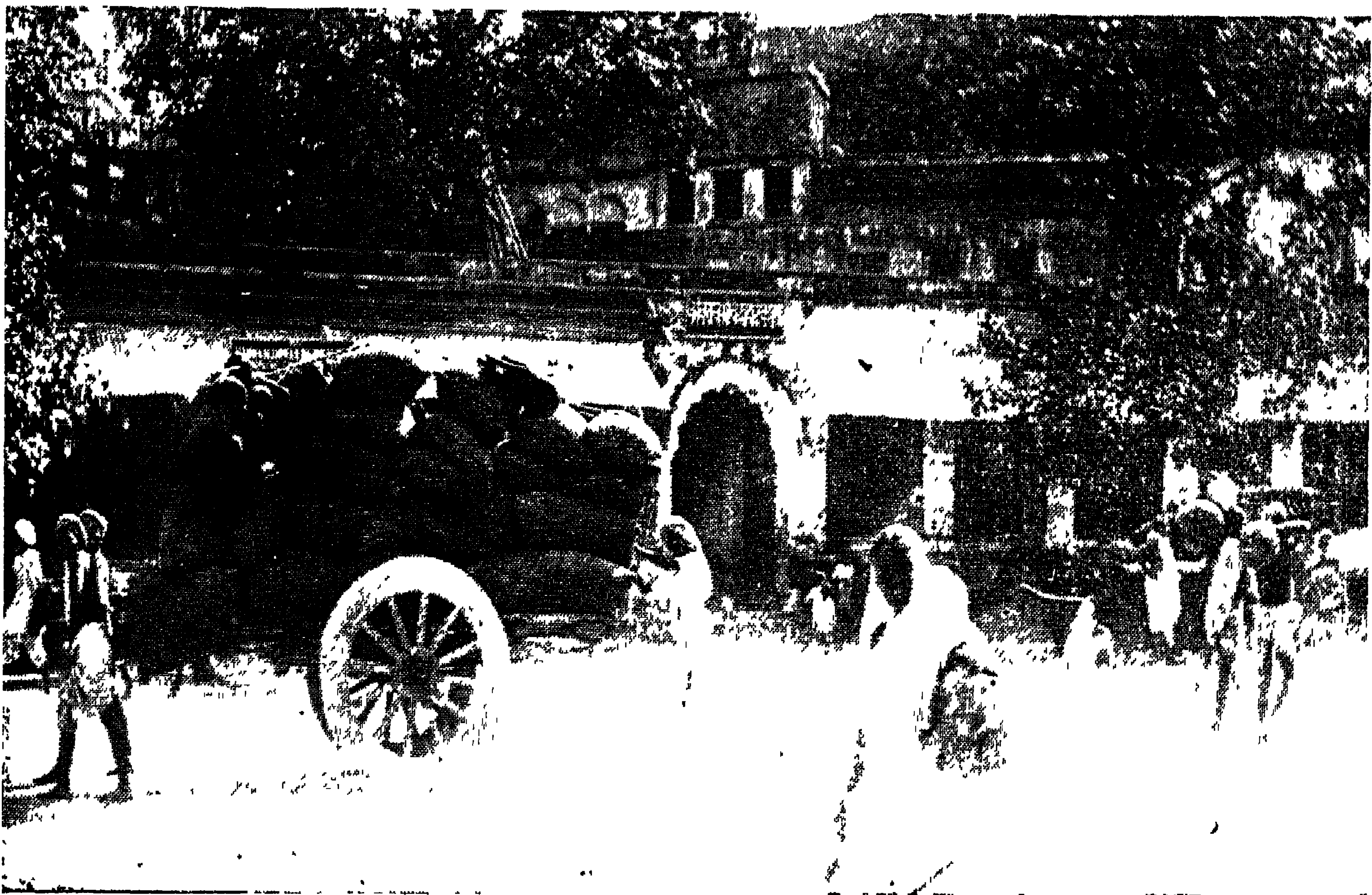
The visible inscriptions on the monolith is said to be of the Gupta character. If they are not the identical types of the period of Asoka, the Grandson of Chandra Gupta, they may be inscriptions made by the later Gupta Kings of Bengal.

In this connection, we should not forget to mention other monoliths attributed to Asoka, found elsewhere in the country. " There is one of these, at Delhi, re-erected by Feroze Shah in his palace, as a monument of his victory over the Hindus." " Three more" Mr, Ferguson adds, " are standing near the river Ganduck in Tirhoot ; and one has been placed on a pedestal in the fort of Allahabad. A fragment of another was discovered near Delhi, and a part of a seventh was used as a roller on the Benares road by a Company's Engineer Officer."

Amongst other relics of Buddhism, we may mention, as of no small importance, the remains near the Bakariya Kund, in the Alipore Mohalla. The Kund lies a few yards west-wards of the Rajghat road leading from the Cantonments to the Ganges. On top of the western bank of the Kund, there are a series of remains which disclose a once magnificent set of buildings. In the good, and habitable portions of some of them, live Mohamadan families, who might have appropiated them, in the absence of claimants, after the disappearance of Buddhism in Benares, while others are reserved as their Masoleums. It is highly propable, that, in this north-western part of the City of Benares, a few works of the Buddhisic order, might have colonised, and the buildings, whose remains we now see, might have been some of their Viharas, Shrines, and other buildings.



ASOKAS PILLAR— A MONOLITH. (IN THE QUEEN'S COLLEGE GROUNDS).



NOT HEAVY ENOUGH TO THE STURDY UPPER—INDIAN K. S. M.& Co.

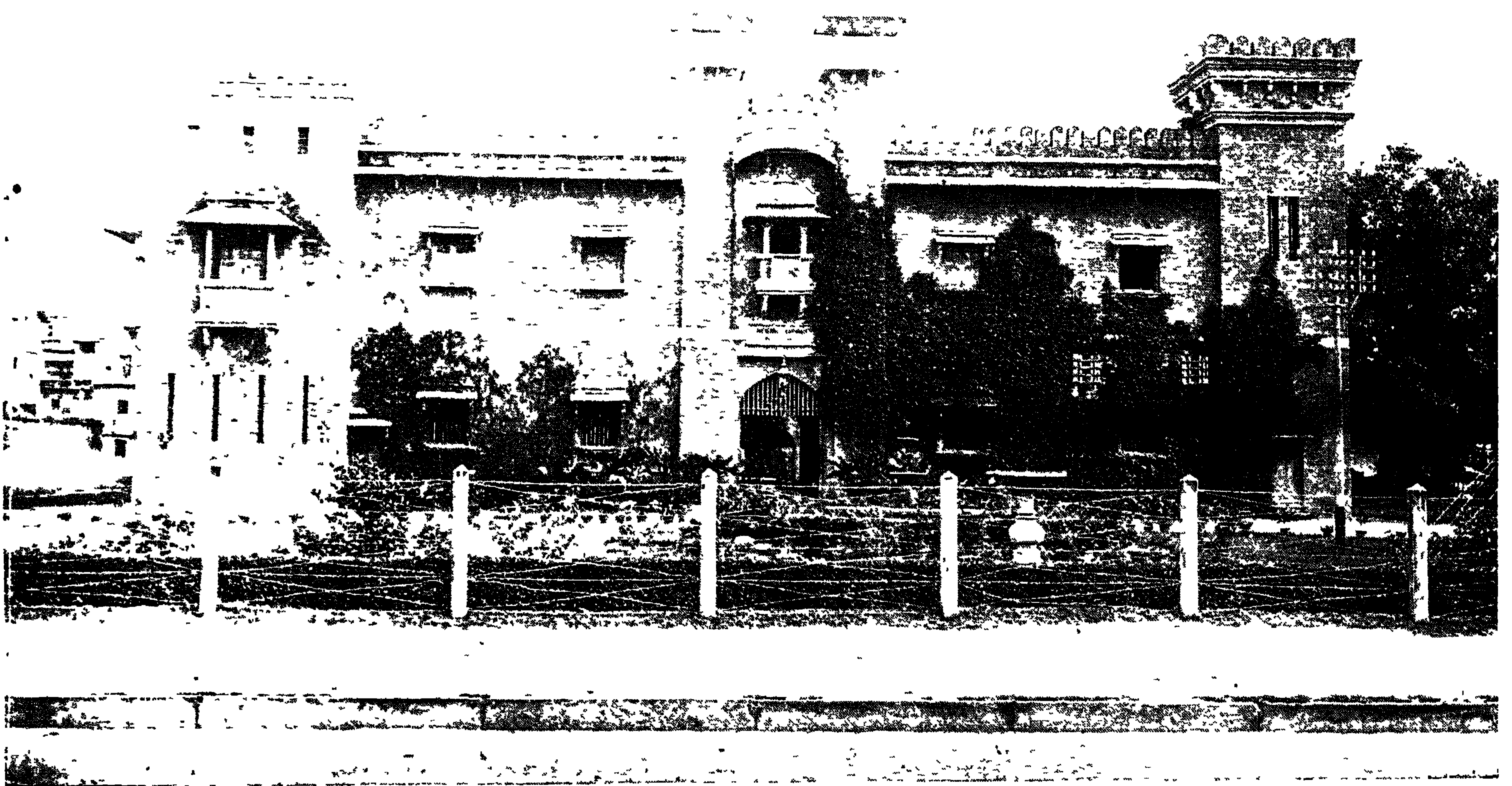
CHAPTER VI.

IN THE CITY.

In continuatiou of the observations made already in the beginning of this part of the book, let us pass through some of the prominent broadways and lanes of modern Benares, to see a few public and private structures, other than those spoken off in the previous chapters. Many structures, ancient and modern adorn this beloved city to-day. Having undergone multifarious changes during successive long ages, Benares still presents an unique and charming appearance with renewed splendour.

The neat little road from the Kâshi station running from its narrow gate-ways continues, straight through a double row of dwelling houses, a distance of about a mile, ere it goes round its semicircular section, around a fine, newly laid garden and tank. The further portion of the road while passing through the second mile, is crowded rather more than what we have passed through, since the people living in the adjoining quarters resort to the various stalls and shops of this quarter, A more recent row of buildings furnished by the Municipality, accommodate a large number of shops, besides vegetable grain and other markets of this locality.

Emerging from the crowdy market section, we soon arrive at a broader portion of the road, on both sides of which rise within spacious open grounds, a series of fine buildings, which we shall now proceed to observe. Towards the left, the very first edifice is that of the 'Kotwali' or Police-station. This building is used as the office of the District Superintendent of Police. It is an imposing structure, with red-brick facing all round, and contains an upper storey besides being surmounted by beautiful turrets. The great attraction of the front is enhanced by the broad garden in front encompassed by iron railing; and the little fountain playing therein sprays admirably its crystal waters over the green foliage round below. The entrance to this building is north-wards, the road running east to west.

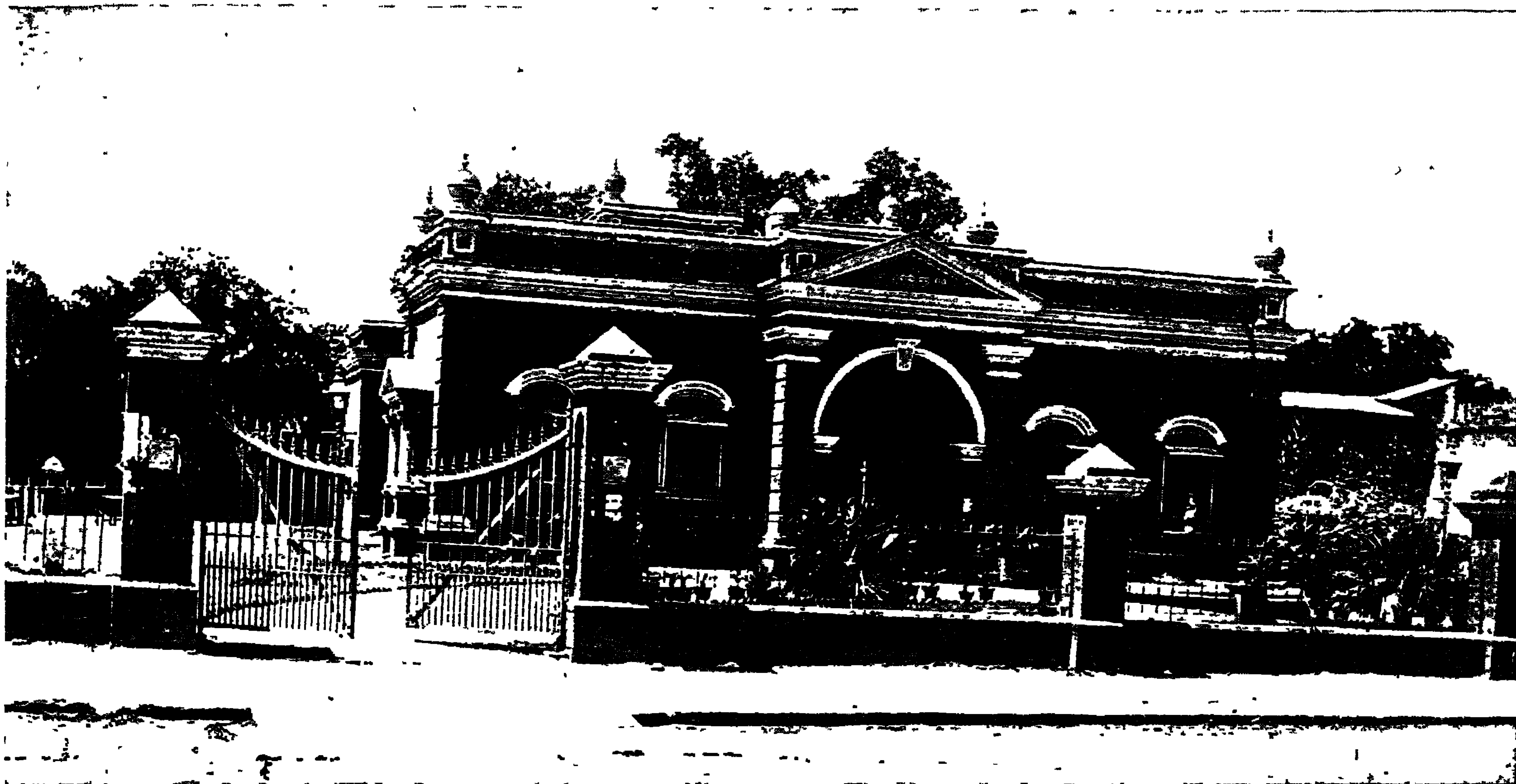


THE KOTWALI—MAIDAGIN QUARTERS K. S. M. & Co.

On the other side of the road, just opposite the Kotwali, is situated the little jewel of a nice building, which accommodates the Nagari Pracharini Sabha. A portion of the adjoining Municipal Garden, has been kindly left at the disposal of this useful institution, by the said authorities.

As its name indicates, its grand object regarding the 'Nagari' has already contributed many substantial benefits to its members, and we wish God-speed to the noble undertaking.

This building and the 'Kotwali' opposite are of a more recent date than the ones we will presently speak of.



THE NAGARI PRACHARINI SABHA· K. S.M.& Co.

All the remaining space, adjoining the Nagari Pracharini Sabah occupying a considerable area from the road to the Madhmeswar Ganj, has been left at the disposal of the public, as a beautifully laid Park, by the Municipality. The beauty of the Gardens is greatly enhanced by a fine tank in its centre, buit by public funds, at the sole endeavour of the late Judge Mr. Ironside. This very agreeable public resort is greatly used by the busy Kasivasis and is located in an excellent part of the city, having replaced a barren and deserted waste of years. As early as 1868, when he published his "Sacred City of the Hindus", Rev. Sherring was suggesting the formation of a Municipality for Benares, with the help of some of the Government Officers and other prominent gentlemen who then adorned Kâshi.

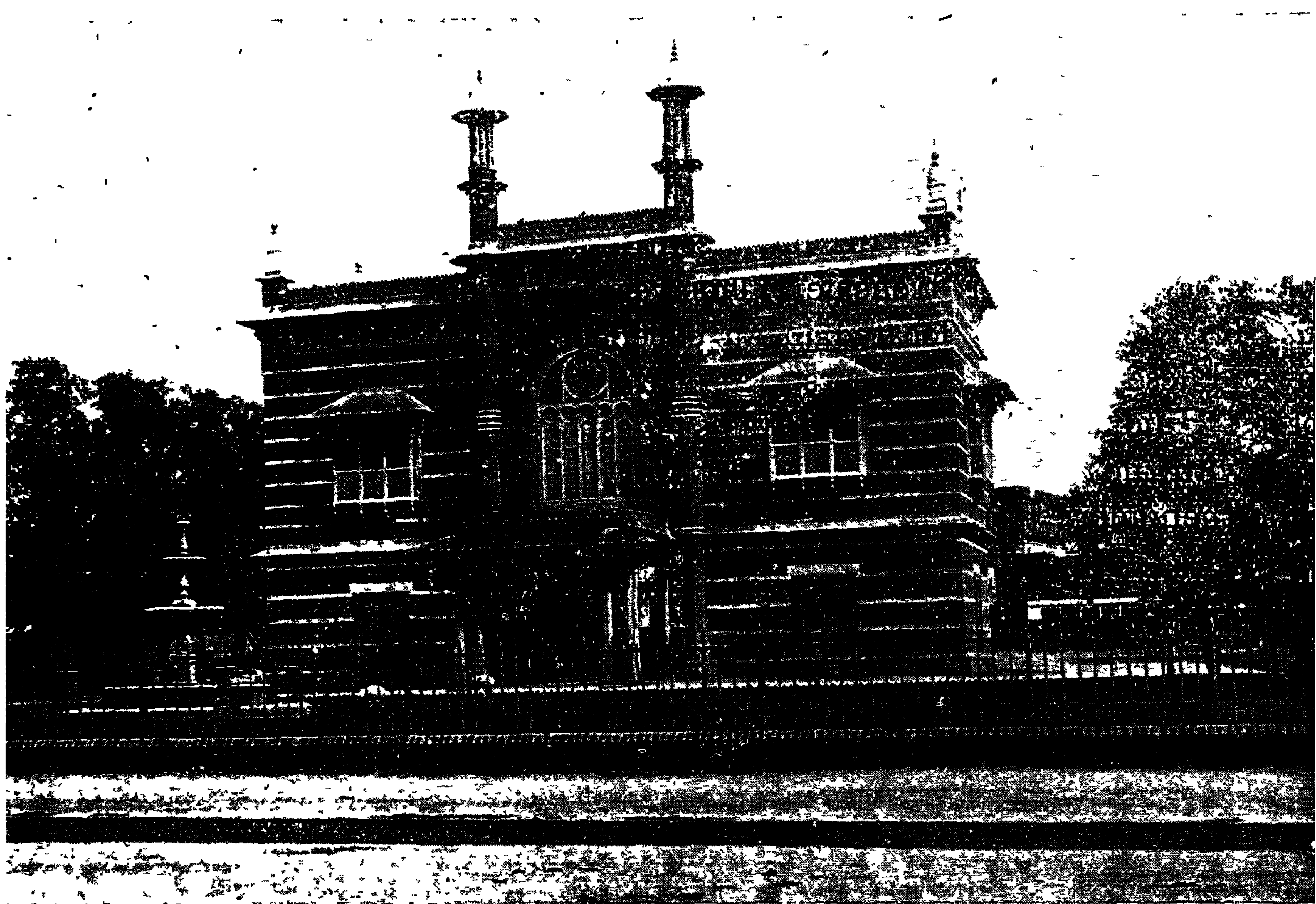


MAIDAGIN GARDEN AND PALACE OF RAJA SIVA PRASAD. K. S. M. & Co,

To the further north of the Municipal Gardens, there rises the singular palace of the late Raja Shiva Prasad, C.IE., of Benares. The miniature garden and house have been erected on a raised platform, which the late Sir William Muir, the then Lieut. Governor of the North-Western Provinces, granted to the Raja, as a mark of special favour, for his very creditable and disintersted public service. It has a red-brick facing, with two upper floors, reaching to a considerable height. This nice little structure, so adjoining the gardens, adds with it, the beauty of the locality to a considerable extent. It continued to be a frequent resort of the late Raja, till his death, and his grandsons Raja Nityanand Prasad Singh and Kumar Satyanand Prasad Singh, now keep it, having recently made a few new alterations and additions, enhancing its beauty further.

Turning round, towards the main road, we observe another structure, grander than all others we have seen so far, and being perhaps the very first and solitary edifice that adorned this deserted waste a few years ago. The site over which these fine buildings have risen of late, was an impassable marshy waste, with dirty kunds and filthy surroundings.

This grand edifice was erected in commemoration of the late Duke of Edinburgh's visit to Benares in 1870, by the late Viziaram Gajapathy, Maharajah of Vizia-



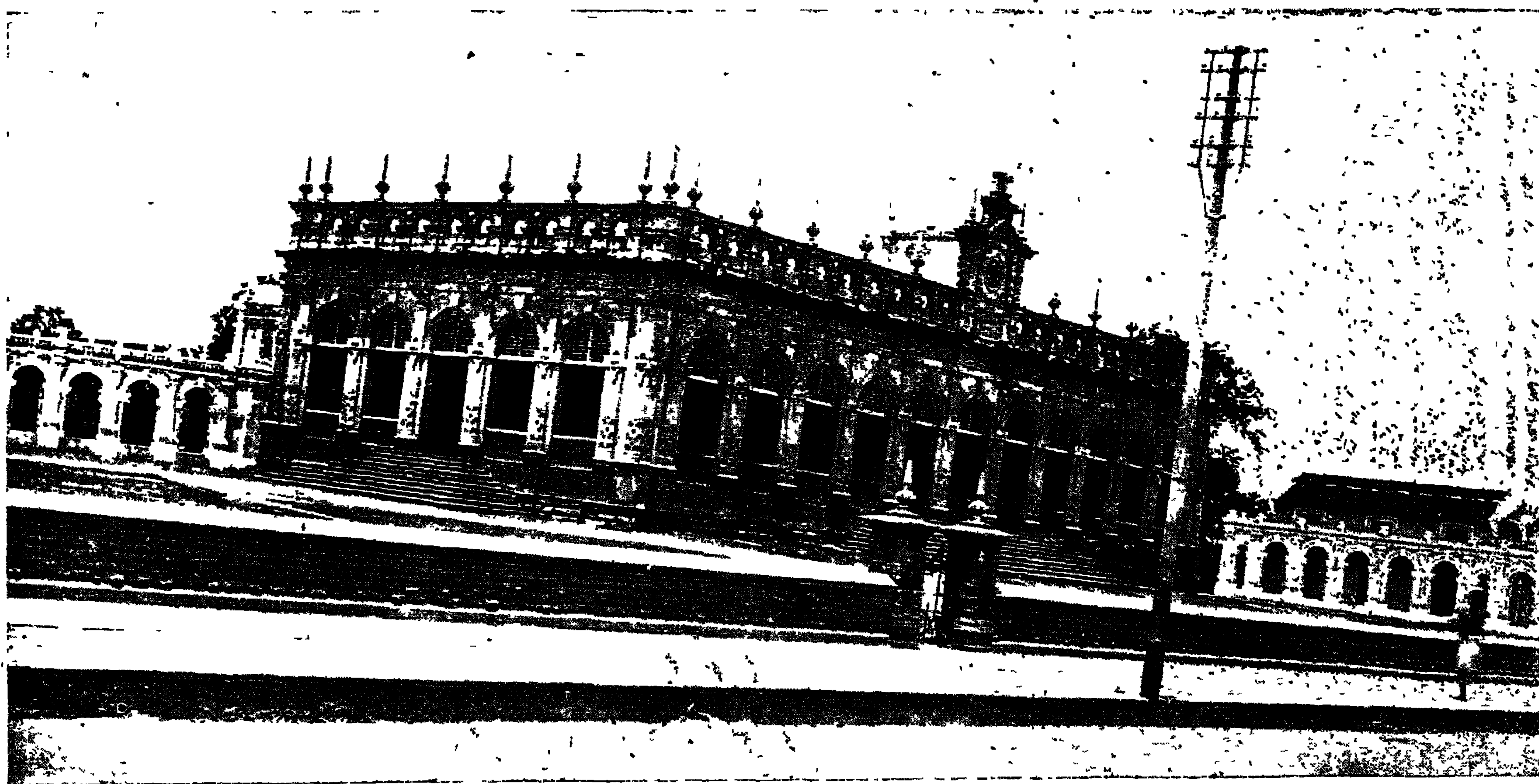
TOWN HALL (ALBERT HALL)—BENARES, K. S. M & Co.

nagram, K.C.S.I. His knowledge of English, his liberal views, and his abundant generosity, secured for him a position of considerable influence. He was also a member of the Legislative Council of India. He lived for several years, in his magnificent palace in the Belupura Ward of the Holy City. He owns extensive property in the district,

besides many others in the City itself, which owes the Belupura Dispensary, as well, to the generous disposition of this amiable gentleman, that then adorned the City. The building when completed. was formally opened by his brother, the late King Edward VII, during his visit to this Sacred City, as Prince of Wales in 1876. It was named 'Albert Hall' in honour of their worthy father. The building exhibits not one style, but a mixture of the Gothic also, which adds to its great attraction. The spacious hall within and the side rooms can well accommodate several thousands on occasions. In fact, there is no other building in the City, suitable for the purpose for which it was intended by the donor, as this one. The Hony. Magistrates are holding their Courts here, on other occasions.

A spacious maidan within its compound, now and then accommodates the erection therein of circus pavillions to give their performances and is under the management of the Government.

While we are in these quarters, let us proceed straight a few yards in the continuation of the road, westward, until we come to a large low compound, enclosing a series of commodious structures. These buildings compose the General Hospital of the City being known as the 'Prince of Wales Hospital.' It is so called since, at the request of the good citizens of Kâshi, the late King Edward VII, during his visit as Prince of Wales, laid the foundation-stone of this useful building in the year 1877.



KING EDWARD'S HOSPITAL. (FORMERLY, PRINCE OF WALES HOSPITAL.)

The above buildings were completed in the year 1881, when the hospital was removed to it from the site of the Municipal Offices where it was located since very long.

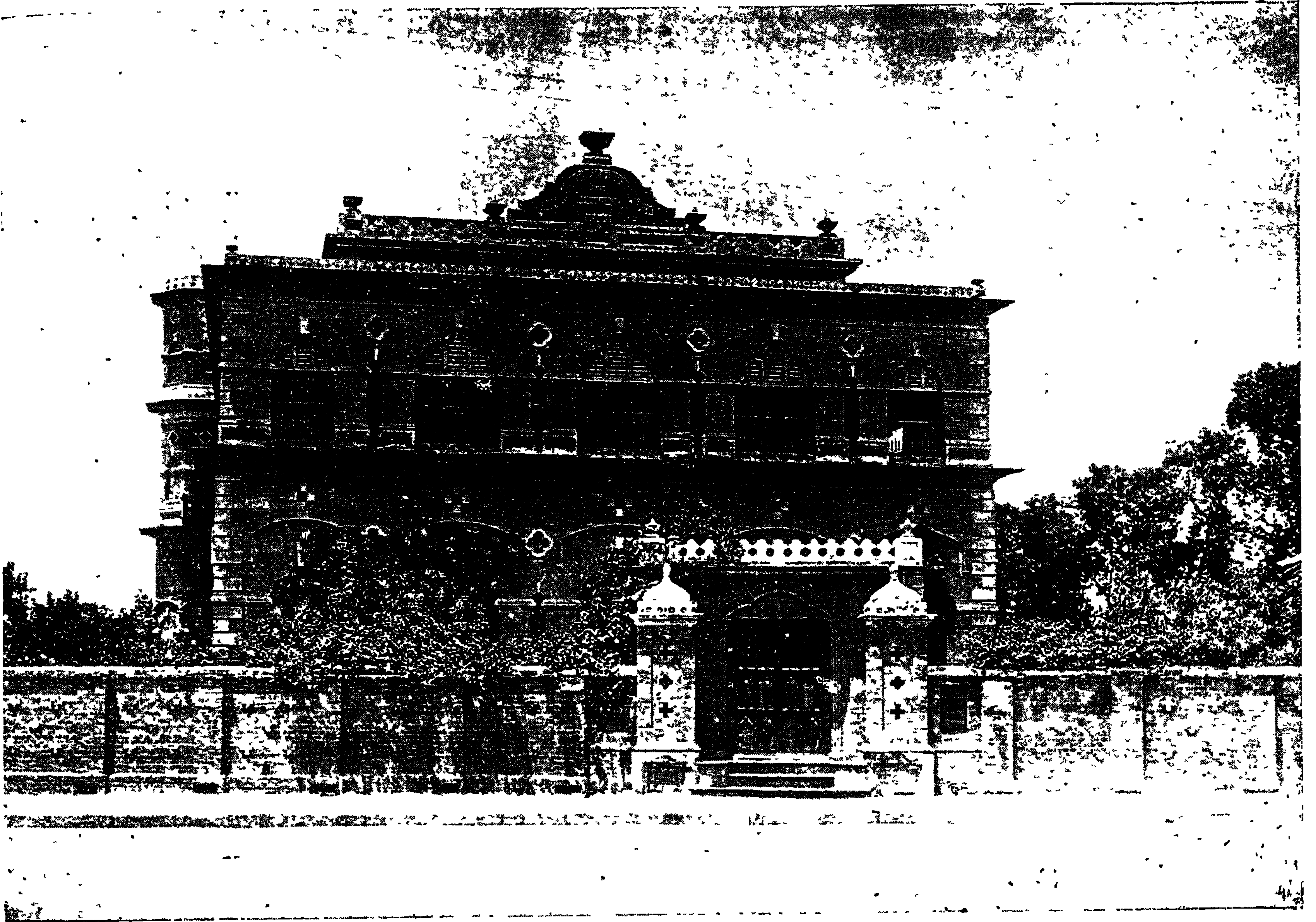
The hospital of Benares, has a history of its own, a nucleus of it having been formed, during the time of Jonathan Duncan, the able Resident and Co-adjutor of Raja Oodit Narayan of Benares, in the better management of his kingdom.

In the year 1787, he gave a grant of land fetching Rs. 2,400 annually, with a view to provide the city with a hospital, that might render useful help to visitors and citizens as well. The grant was enjoyed by two *Hakims*, not to the great benefit of the public. When finally it was found out that the mismanagement of the affairs must be remedied, a separate committee composed of the elite of the city, was appointed, who had half the income, at their disposal. The good committee soon collected a large sum of money, a portion of which was invested for the purchase of a house for the Civil Surgeon, while the remaining portion of Rs. 24,345 were invested in Government Securities. An annual grant of Rs. 1881 was sanctioned in 1813, towards establishment charges, and the Jaghir commuted to a subsidy of Rs. 1200 annually.

The Hospital consists of two large blocks; and is divided into eight wards, named after the respective donors. There is also an operation Hall, with seperate accomodation for private patients. There is a capital of Rs. 39,100, for the institution, safely invested and is the foremost in its line in the province. After the year 1884, when the old committee transferred their control of its affairs to the District Board, they held it for a period, and handed it over to the present controling body in 1891.

We must not omit to mention the 'Belupura Dispensary' started about 1845, at the house of the Maharaja of Vizianagram, and supported by the Maharani. It 1854, the hospital came into the hands of the Government, with an annual subsidy by the Maharani for its maintenance. Subsequently the annual grant was commuted to a lump sum of Rs. 20,000 which was since increased by another Rs. 10,000. The Hospital has an invested capital of Rs. 30,500, and is under the management of the District Board.

Adjoining the 'Prince of Wales' or 'King Edward's Hospital,' as it is now called, is the 'Ishwari Memorial Hospital,' erected to the memory of the late Maharajah, Ishwar Prasad Narayin Singh G.C.S.I., in the year 1890, at a cost of Rs. 96,000, being subscribed amount, of the present Maharajah, Sir Prabhu Narain Sing, GC.IE ,and other prominent citizens. The foundation stone for this edifice was laid in the year 1890, by Her Excellency, the Marchioness of Landsdowne. This institution was a great desideratum of the City, keenly felt by the citizens. It was the earnest desire of the late Maharajah that this demand of the citizens should be fulfilled, and it had been sufficiently fulfilled by his noble son, the present Maharajah. This is the only Hospital in good condition for the treatment of Indian Ladies, besides the one at Belupura The funds now aggregate to Rs. 39,500, with an annual grant, towards expenses of Rs. 5,700 from the District Board and of Rs. 3,600 from the Maharajah af Benares. The local branch of the Dufferin Fund manage its affairs. A recent and useful extension to the buildings have been made at a cost of Rs. 30,000.

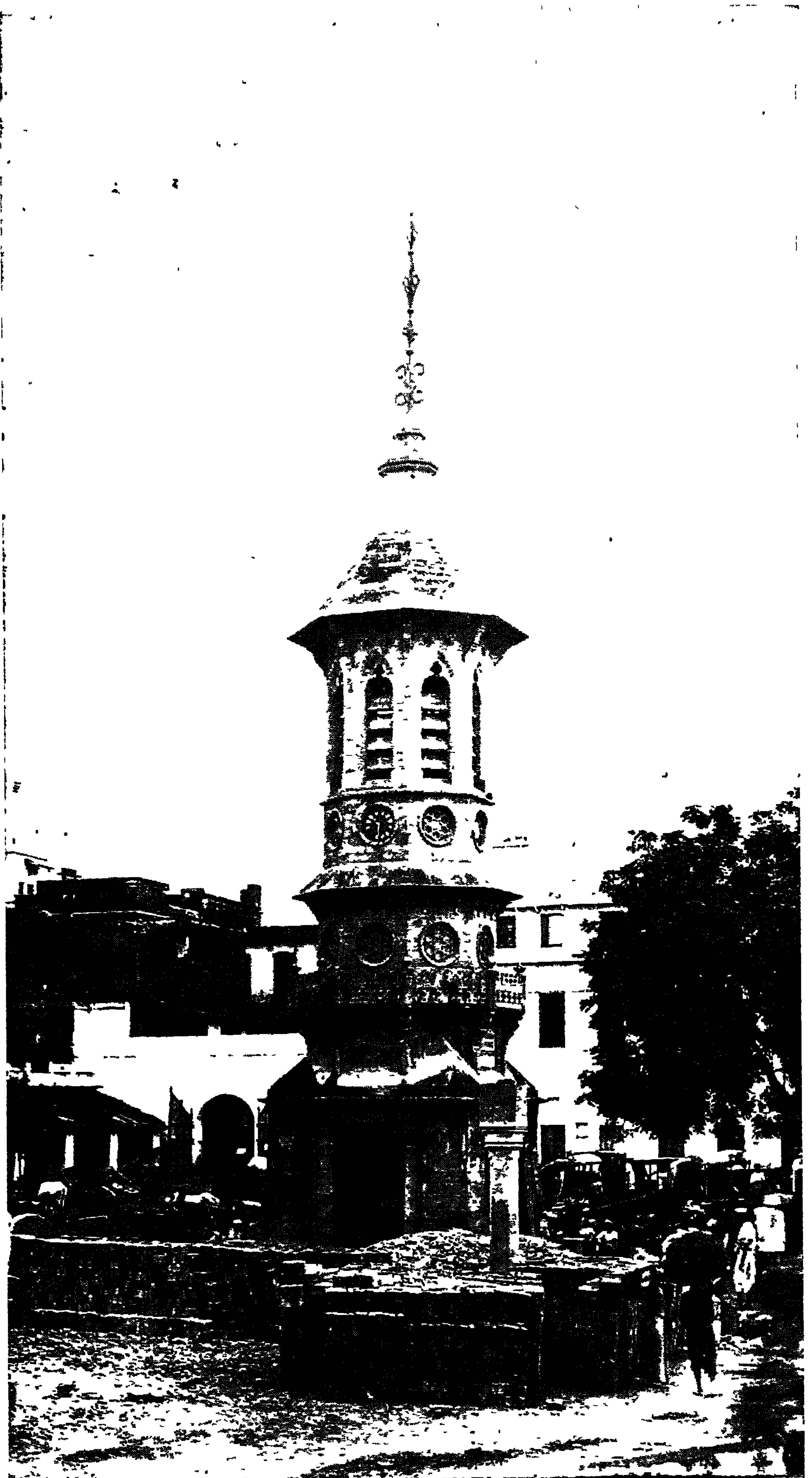


ISHWAREE MEMORIAL HOSPITAL.

About the year 1840, were started for the convenience of people, several dispensaries, and an important one was at Sikraul in the Civil Surgeon's house; and the second, near the Police Station at Chauk, while the third, about ten years later, in Ausan Ganj, endowed by Raja Deo Narain Singh. The one at Sikraul was subsequently removed to its present site at Kali Sankar Asylum, which is a charitable institution for the reception of the blind, maimed and indigent, as well as the poor orphans and helpless lepers. It has a fund of 48,000, and other sundry rents, left by Raja Kali Shankar Ghosal, who was a leading gentleman of the City, in the early years of the last century. It was originally located in the Mint, and subsequently removed and it now draws a grant of Rs. 100 only. Since the erection of the buildings in Hukulgang, in 1852, it has been removed there, and is under the supervision of the Civil Surgeon. The Chowk and Ausan Gang dispensaries have, since the erection of the New Hospital buildings, been amalgamated, with it, while the one at Sikraul alone remains under the control of the District Board. The Victoria Hospital in the Belupura Ward, was erected in 1890 by an English lady, and is maintained purely by subscriptions collected in England, and is getting an annual grant from the Government for medicines. There are, besides, the dispensaries of the Police and Jail department. "The total number of patients treated at the various hospitals amounts to nearly 120,000 persons annually, while the cost to the District Board is about Rs. 16,000.

Turning round from the Hospitals, and proceeding towards the *Chowk* or commercial centre, the business square of the City, let us observe some of the chief charecteristics of this locality, which makes it so prominent.

On our way to the Chowk, we cannot miss noticing the little clock tower, adjoining the road, in the Nichi Bagh, erected by the late Maharajah Ishwaree Prasad Narayin Singh, G. C. S I, as a free gift to the citizens on the auspicious occasion of the marriage of the present Maharajah It was thought desirable to commemorate the event by giving something substantial to the citizens; and as this locality was then devoid of the benefit of pipe water, well and a clock were found to be suitable gifts, and the Municipal Board kindly erected the same.



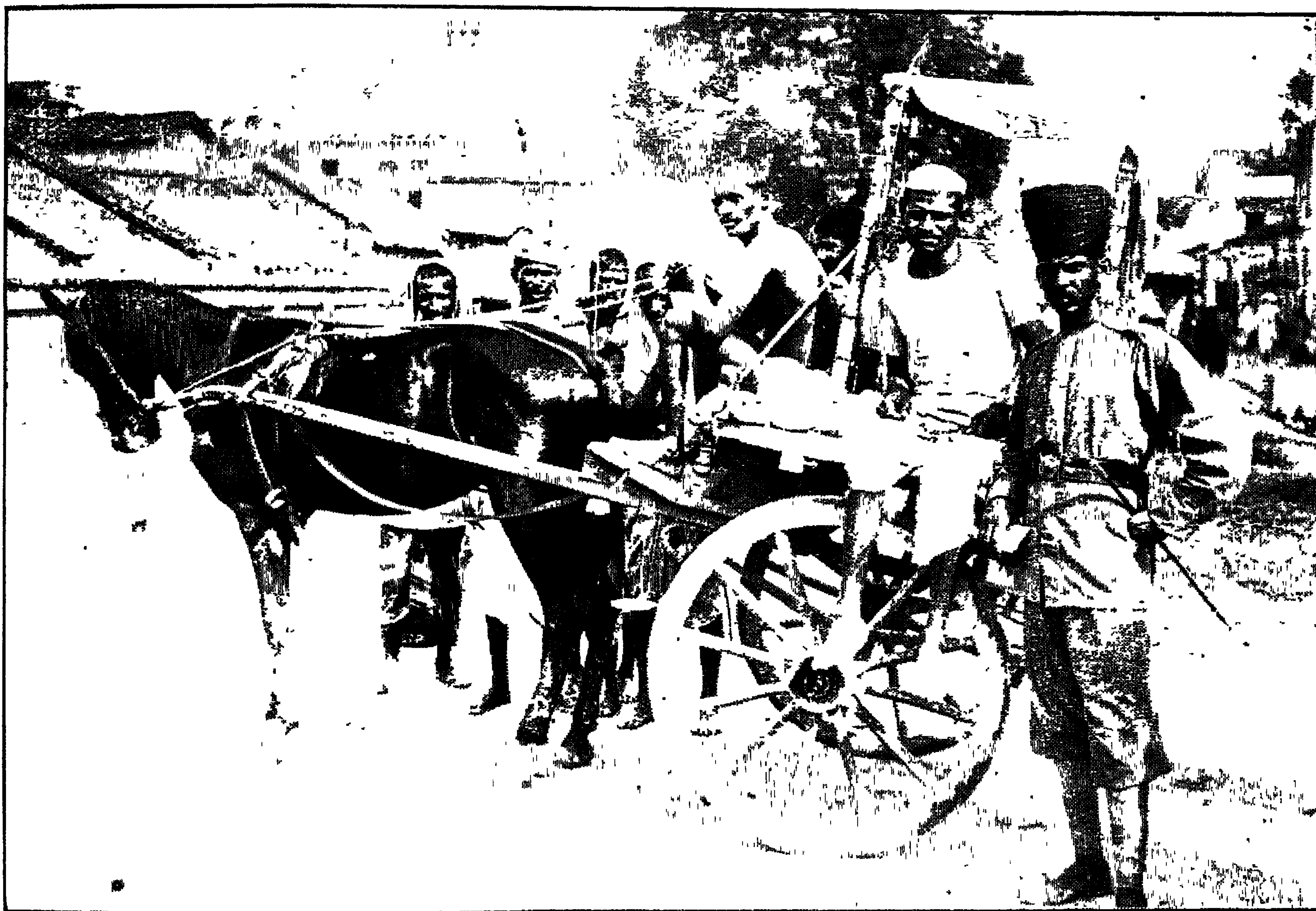
MEMORIAL WELL AND CLOCK TOMER NICHI BAG, K. S. M: & Co.

We must yet point out, that the clock has now gone out of joints, and is dead to the public, in spite, as we are told, of the efforts of the Municipality to make it go. It remains obstinately silent, only as a dumb and unpleasant remembrancer of the neglect of some persons responsible for the proper maintenance of such memorials.

Further its neighbourhood, is one of the most neglected, and the filthiest locality in the City. The space, it appears is reserved as a cart-stand. We cannot expect better condition, unmetalled, as it is, when hundreds of carts and conveyances are every moment to be seen at this busy centre. May the good City Fathers kindly take this into their

serious consideration, and convert this ground and others in the City used for similar purposes, into a well-concreted, raised ones, deserving the name of cart-stands, as surely they must have seen how agreeably they are kept in other Municipalities. Benares is certainly not a small place, nor is its traffic confined only to the citizens. The thousands of in-coming and out-going pilgrims and visitors to this important ancient City, do need many conveyances, and it would do well, were the Honourable Members of the Board, realize the importance of furnishing for their convenience, besides by providing a better class of conveyances, with stricter supervision of the fares, etc.

We cannot really conceive how one could have thought of building a vehicle of the kind you see in the illustration. Whether it typifies one of the famous *Rattas* of old, or whether the worthy Upper Indians, do not feel their awkward construction, so very uncomfortable and dangerous to the user, we are at a loss to see; but a more dangerous or a more uncomfortable conveyance, if so we may call it, than the funny 'Ekka,' cannot be thought of.



THE 'EKKA'—A FUNNY CONVEYANCE.

Though it may deprive many poor people from a source of livelihood, however precarious, yet, considering the disadvantages, and dangers thereby, we venture to suggest the suppression of these rare 'Ekkas.' The authorities and the public might have seen many of these with such miserable appearance, and shaky fixtures, that their very approach, and the pitiable condition of the poor animals yoked to them, is disgusting, not to

speak of their dirty, stinking, ragged drivers, of rather unpleasant character. The illustration may give an idea of a moderately well-kept 'Ekka'. The rag of cloth tied to the sticks forms the cover to shelter the gentleman on white bunyan and muslin cap. He has yet been used to drive in it, his national conveyance. Though one of his feet is now resting on the axle of the wheel, and the other is hanging between its spokes, yet, when his bare-bodied coachman holding the reins, let them loose, he would raise them up and prevent them from being broken to pieces.


ON THE ROAD TO THE CHOWK—BENARES.

On the way to the Chowk, immediately adjoining the cart-stand referred to, is the General Post Office, of the City. On both sides of this part of the road, will be found a series of stalls and larger shops of boots and shoes, scents and essential oils, hookas, muslin caps, &c., many other miscellaneous articles of commerce, while their spacious upper stories are occupied, invariably, by larger dealers of wholesale and retail merchandise. Some of the rich private bankers of whom there are a good number in the wealthy City, carry their lucrative business in many mansions, along this central busines thorough-fare. The palatial edifices, on both sides of this prominent street, must be seen with one's own eyes, to have an idea of the richness of scenery they provide.

A prominent business street, rather narrower than the main street from which, it proceeds in an easterly direction, iscalled the Thatteri-Bazar being the special centre of the brass industry of Benares.

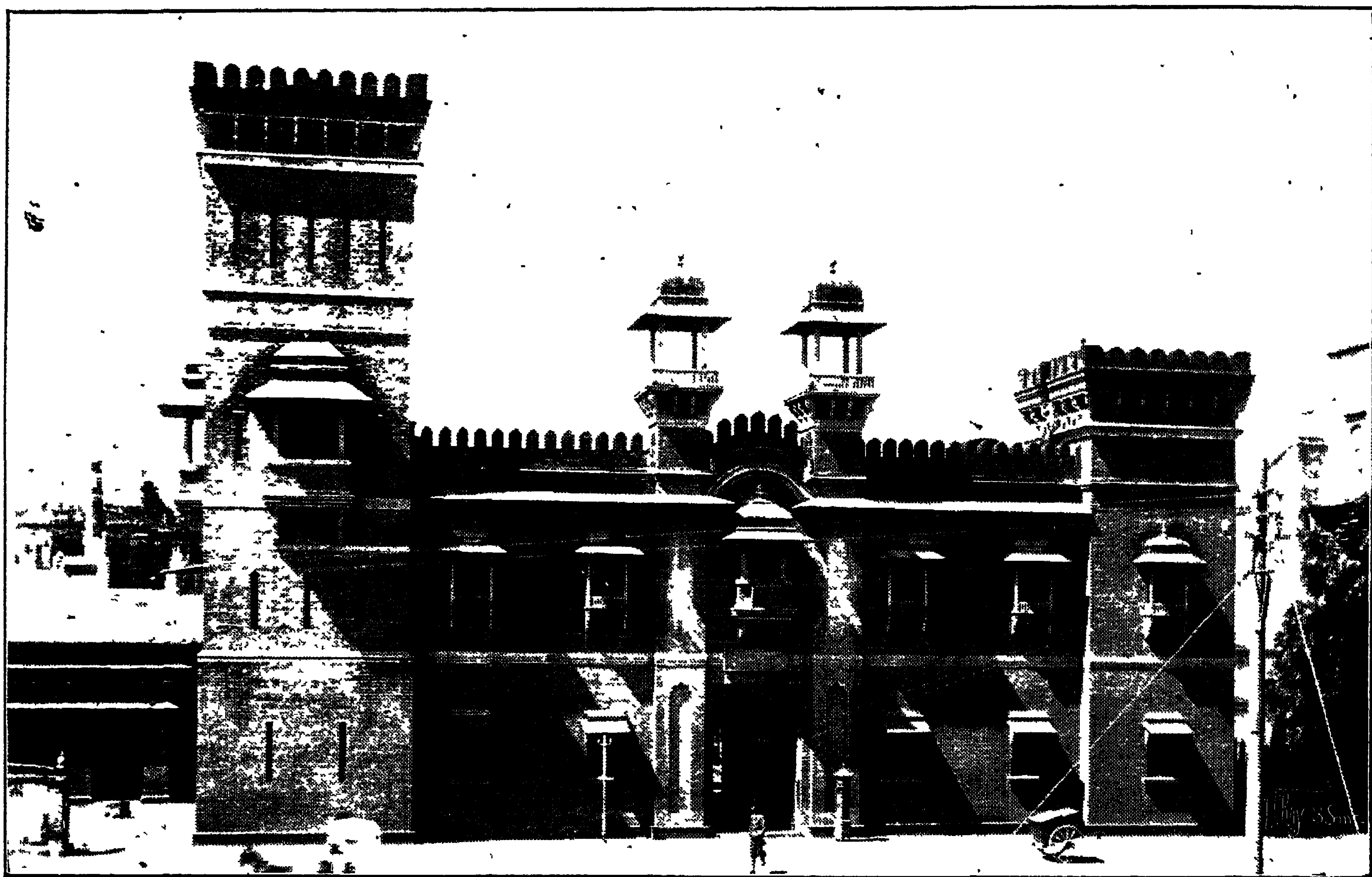
This Thatheri Bazar Street is one of the oldest, in the City and was, till the formation recently of the main roads we are now passing through, the only widest street in Benares, with many palatial edifices, on both sides, that James Prinsep, in his Views in Benares, published in the early years of the preceding century, thought fit to give a reproduction of it.



THATHERI BAZAR.

Proceeding onwards through the main street, we soon arrive at the famous Chowk or Square of Benares. Of the many magnificent structures that adorn this central part of the City, one of the most prominent, is the New Kotwali Buildings or the Central Police Station of Benares.

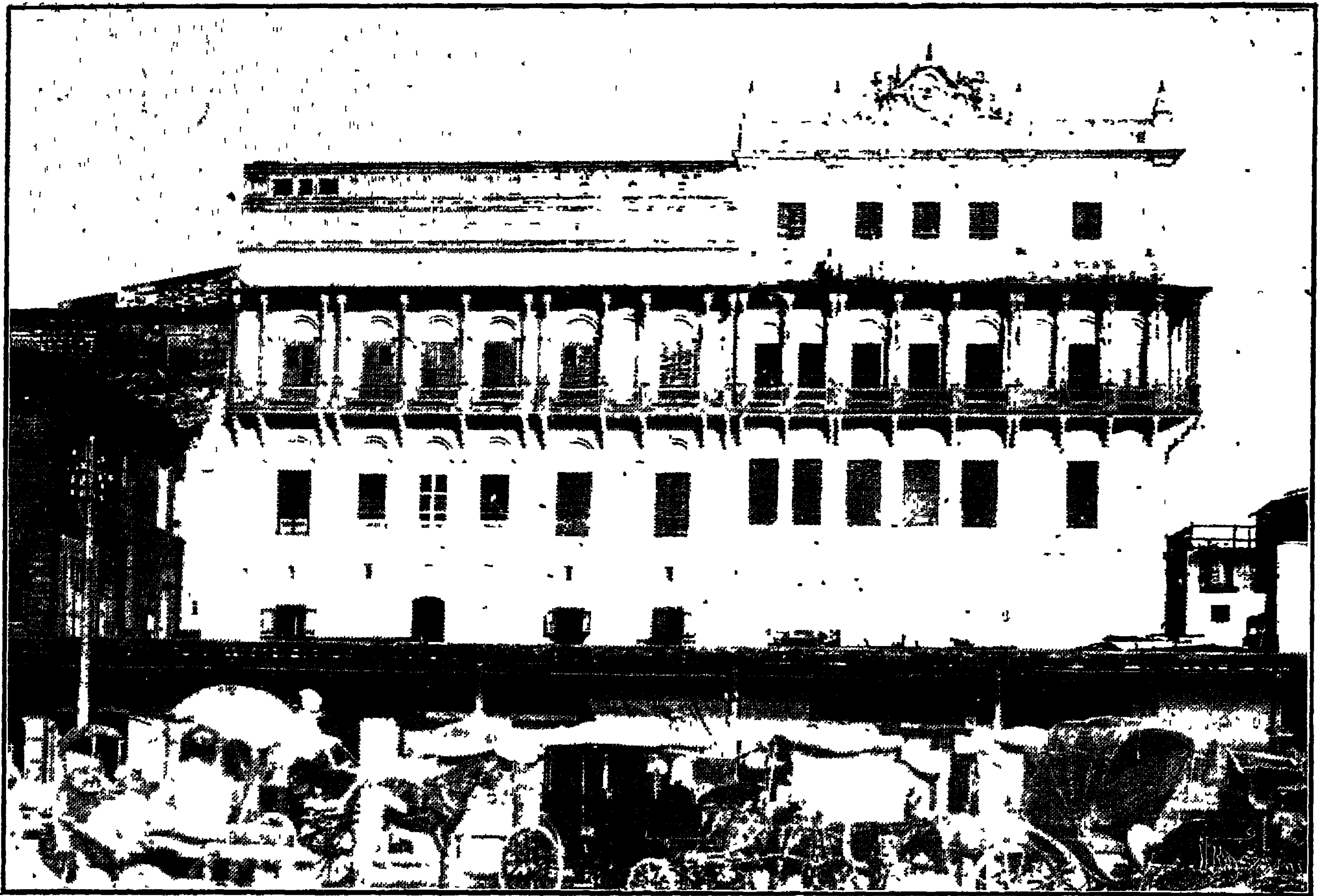
This Mansion stands on the site of the older Police Station which had stood there for many years. It is a very handsome, massive, red-brick-faced edifice, facing the attractive New Exchange Buildings, erected by a well-known banker and *Reis* of Benares, Babu Baddho Mal, *alias* Babu Balbhadra Das. It was at the kind suggestion of the late Mr. E. H. Radice, the most popular, and respected Magistrate of Benares, that this grand structure came into existence. The facade of this new Kotwali buildings, in which the chief entrance is facing the east, consists of two stories with projecting balconies of stone, and an upper story of a stone turret, relieving thereby, the monotonous redness, which is the chief characteristic of the modern buildings erected by the Public Works Department, in these provinces. It is a great pity, that the designors, of this excellent structure did not think of having a clock, anywhere on its top, even as the older



KOTWALI—THE CENTRAL POLICE STATION—CHOWK, K. S. M. & Co.

building had, for it need not be told, that Benares requires a clock keeping correct time, at least in this busy centre.

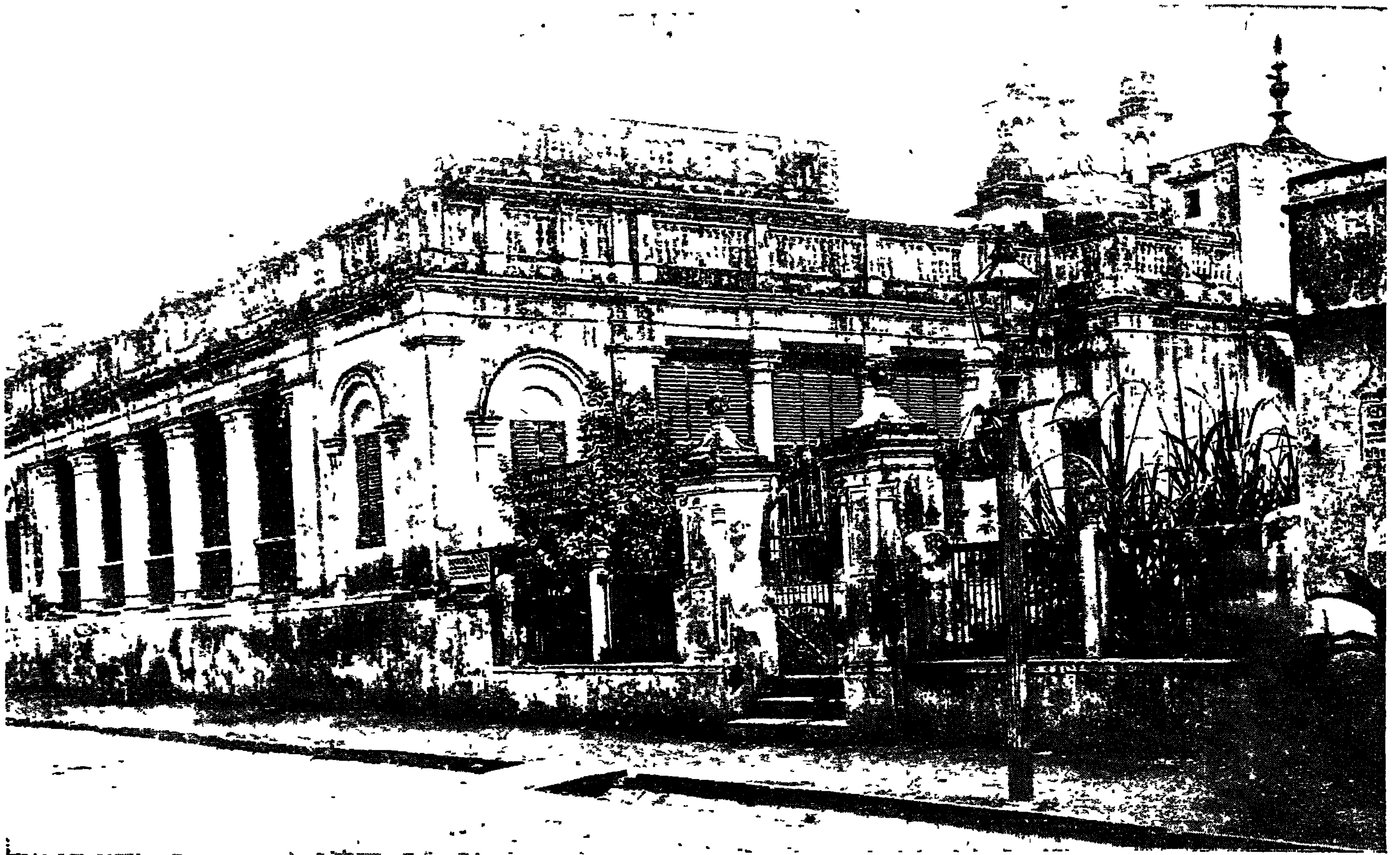
This Chowk is in the ward of the same name, which forms practically the centre of the City, both from the commercial and religious aspect. Though comparatively with other wards, it is smaller, yet, it is the most crowded one, with pucca edifices of the wealthy citizens of Benares. We may also add that this ward is purely Hindu, and naturally forms itself into two sections, by the Chowk road. To the south of the Kotwali, and immediately adjoining it, is the extremity of the narrow commercial lane called Dal-ki-Mandi, which runs " westwards to the Chetgung road, and skirting the Naya Chowk, a municipal market for the sale of cloth and general merchandise. Close by



BABU BADDHO MAL'S HOUSE—CHOWK K. S. M. & Co.

is the old Harha Sarai, still largely used by travellers From the Dal-ki-Mandi. the Kasipura Street runs northwards parallel. to the Chowk to join that from Chetganj to Rajghat, and this is the principal bazar for German silver and iron work. To the extreme north, is the Gola Dinanath, (the locality with the hospitals, already observed), the great market for spices, tobacco and the like. Practically all the area to the north-west of the Chowk road is taken up by bazars and is entirely commercial. To the south-east there are some important bazars, but the interest is mainly religious. The Kachori Gali road leading south from the Chowk to Dasaswamedh contains numbers of Halwai shops, while the beginning of this road and the Kunj Gali, going eastwards from the Chowk to Ramghat, possess numerous establishments of kincob makers and constitutes a most important business quarter of Benares. North of the latter a second road runs eastwards, and this is the Thatheri Bazar, being the special seat of the brass industry. The southern part of the Kachori Gali, however is almost wholly taken up by temples, and the shops are merely those for the sale of idols, sacred threads and other appurtenances of worship, The chief is the so-called Golden Temple, the central shrine of Bisheshwar the patron Deity of Benares, which is also approached by a flight of steps leading down from the Chowk near Carmichael Library. From it a narrow lane, called the Sakhi Binayak, goes to Dasaswamedh. and this course is taken by pilgrims every morning."—District Gazetteer, vol. xxvi.

Proceeding further, by the continuation of the Chowk road towards the Dasaswamedh Road, we come by the famous and popular Charmichael Library, which serves a very useful purpose at this central part of the City.



THE CHARMICAEL LIBRARY. K. S. M. & Co.

A little before the year 1872, Rai Bahadur Sankata Prasad conceived the idea of starting a reading room in the centre of the City, which was a great desideratum at that time. Such was his enthusiasm and earnestness that he hired a room near Chowk, and having stocked two almirahs with books, he started the reading room. As time passed by, the educated community recognised the necessity of having a seperate building for their Reading Room and Library. Having had the privelege of being and belonging to the upper strata of society, the late Rai Sankata Prasad, easily secured the co-operation and sympathy of the nobility of the City. When sufficient funds were collected, building operations were commenced upon a piece of land given free by the father of the late Maharajah of Vizianagar. Mr. C. P. Carmichael, who was then the Commissioner and Agent to the Governor General in Benares, was requested by the Library Committee to lay the foundation stone of the building, and he did so with alacrity. The library was named after him, in recognition of his extreme popularity. Since then, this institution has improved steadily, with a building of its own, in aprominent centre of the City. It is a single storied building, running from east to west, with a verandah on its northern and eastern side. It has a hall, which serves as a reading room. The main entrance to the Library is on the road side, opening into a fine little garden to the west of the building. The books of the library are stocked in two inner rooms of the house. The convenient locality of the Library has rendered it easily accessible to the busy people of the ward. There is a proposal to increase the space of the Reading Room and Library, and we wish all success to the earnest attempts of the secretary, Babu Kalika Prasad, the son of the late Rai Bahadur, Sankata Prasad.



STREET VIEW—SATHYA NARAIN'S TEMPLE. K, S. M. & Co.



A BENARES BROAD STREET. K. S. M. & Co.

STREET VIEW—GUDAULIA NORTH—LATE BENARES MAHARANEE'S TEMPLE. K. S. M: & Co.



STREET VIEW—GUDAULIA WEST, K, S. M & Co,

Amongst the several beneficial institutions, that Jonathan Duncan, the able Administrator Resident in Benares, did for the better government of the Province, may be mentioned as most concerning the welfare of the people, the institutions of Hospitals, already spoken of, the organization of the Police, and the founding of a Sanskrit College in 1792. Since this date, various attempts have been made by private bodies, besides Missionaries, to spread education, in the Province, but without much appreciable results. It was not favorably looked upon by the people. On the other hand, the starting of the missionary institutions about the early years of last century, kindled the suspicious people to look upon them as so many attempts to convert people to Christianity, though it is true the Christian Missionaries have come and established themselves in our midst, under the shade of the British Government, who adopt a neutral policy in regard to religions, for no other purpose more than to save the crores of Indians from hell, and to keep them under the immediate supervision of their Saviour.

The subsequent attempts of the Government to promote education, by a series of investigations and trials enabled them to have in the year 1870, seventy five *halquabandi* and 289 indigenous schools in the province, with about 6,000 boys on the rolls. Since the year 1885, when the establishment of the District Board was formed, the management of Schools, and education imparted therein coming under the management of the District Board, the improvement was well maintained with beneficial results. It was found in the year 1906, the total number of pupils in the schools under the Board was 10,746.

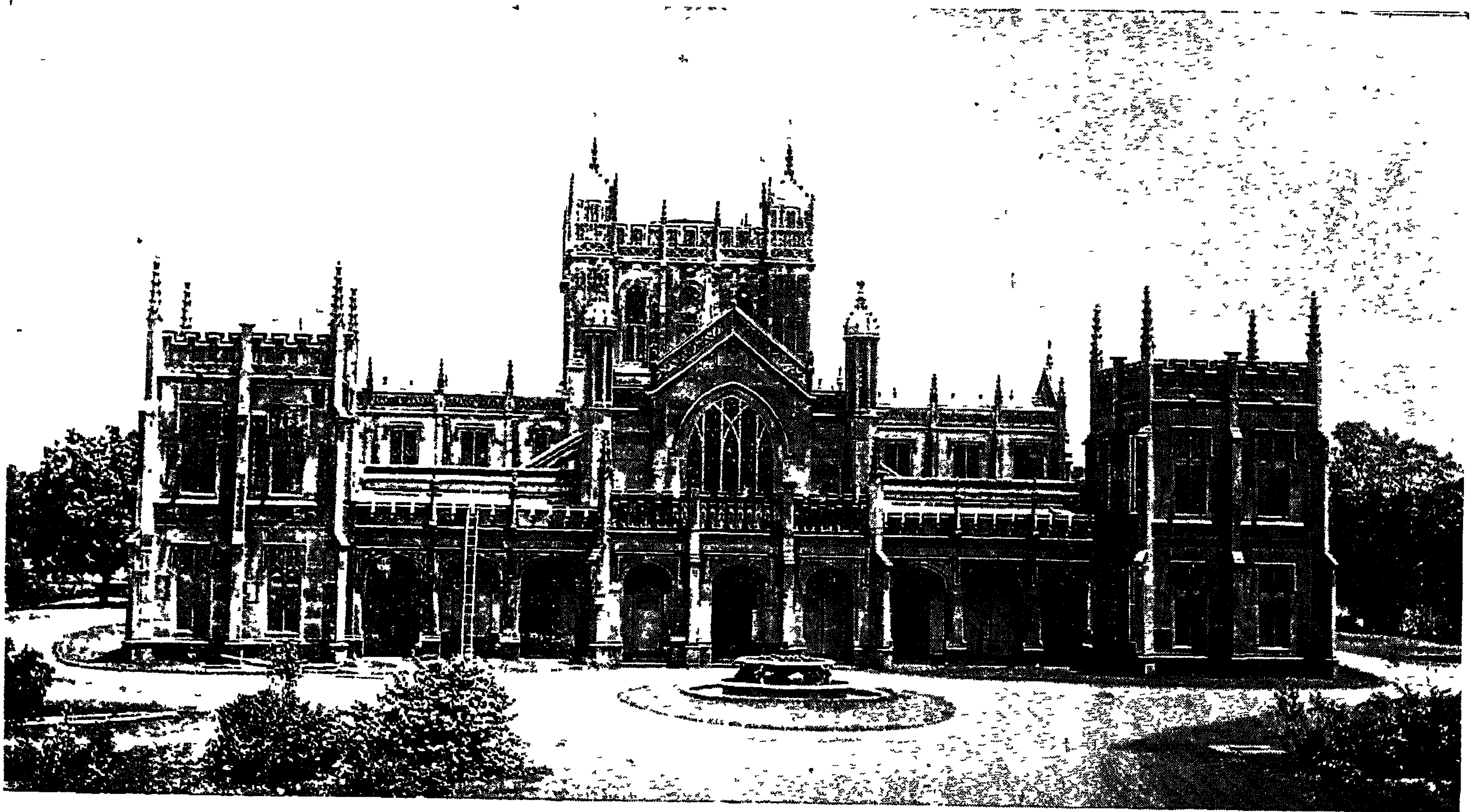
The Municipality of Benares, are also maintaining about sixteen Primary Schools, though not of the high standard of those of the District Board. The Mission Schools in 1906, numbered about thirty one exclusive of Jai Narayan's College with an average of about 1,791 pupils of both sexes There are, besides some other private schools of considerable standing and doing good work. The Bengalitola School, the Maharashtra School, the Harishchandra School and the HanumanSeminary are some of them in good condition.

Of all others, the most prominent institution in Benares is that of the Queen's College. It is a very old institution, as dating its origin, if not under its present name, but as a Sanskrit College from the year 1791, when Mr. Jonathan Duncan established, it, maintaining its expenses out of the surplus revenue. It was with the noble object of preserving the ancient sanskrit lore, and of maintaining its dignity, that the Resident obtained the sanction for its establishment from Lord Cornwallis, A sum of Rs 14,000 was granted for the institution, which was subsequently increased to Rs. 20,000. With a certain number of Professors, and Principal Kasinath Pandit, the College was opened in a hired house, in the City on the 28th Oct. 1791.

The arrangement continued till the year 1801, when the Principal and other Professors were dismissed for mismanagement, while the college was given a new modelling with 12 Professors, and 121 scholars on the roll. Until the year 1815, the College did not attain any appreciable efficiency; progressing slowly since that date, to the appointment of Capt. Fell as secretary, when its position was enhanced and the

institution prospered, with over two hundred out-students besides the sixty foundation scholars. Under the subsequent management of Capt. Thoresby in the year 1830, the Benares Anglo-Indian Seminary, was started which was changed into the Government School in 1836, with an English Master, In the following years, attempts were made to amalgamate the Sanskrit College with the English school and even to abolish the College. Finally in 1843, when the Local Government took charge of the institution, Mr. Muir, the Principal, substituted scholarships for stipends, and the College was taken to the suburbs from the City. WhenDr. Ballantyne took charge of the College, great progress were made, especially in the indroduction of English in the Sanskrit College. The present magnificent building, was also erected, during 1847 to 1852, at a cost of £ 13,000, the architect being Major Kittoe. the Government Archæologist.

It is a grand Gothic structure, of the perpendicular style, with Chunar free-stone facing The central tower is seventy-five feet high; the nave, sixty feet long, thirty feet wide, and thirty two feet high. The several corners of the buildings are surmounted by adequate towers connected by open arcades The names of the various donors to the grand edifice, are engraved in appropriate places, on stones, over such places which are designated as their special gifts.

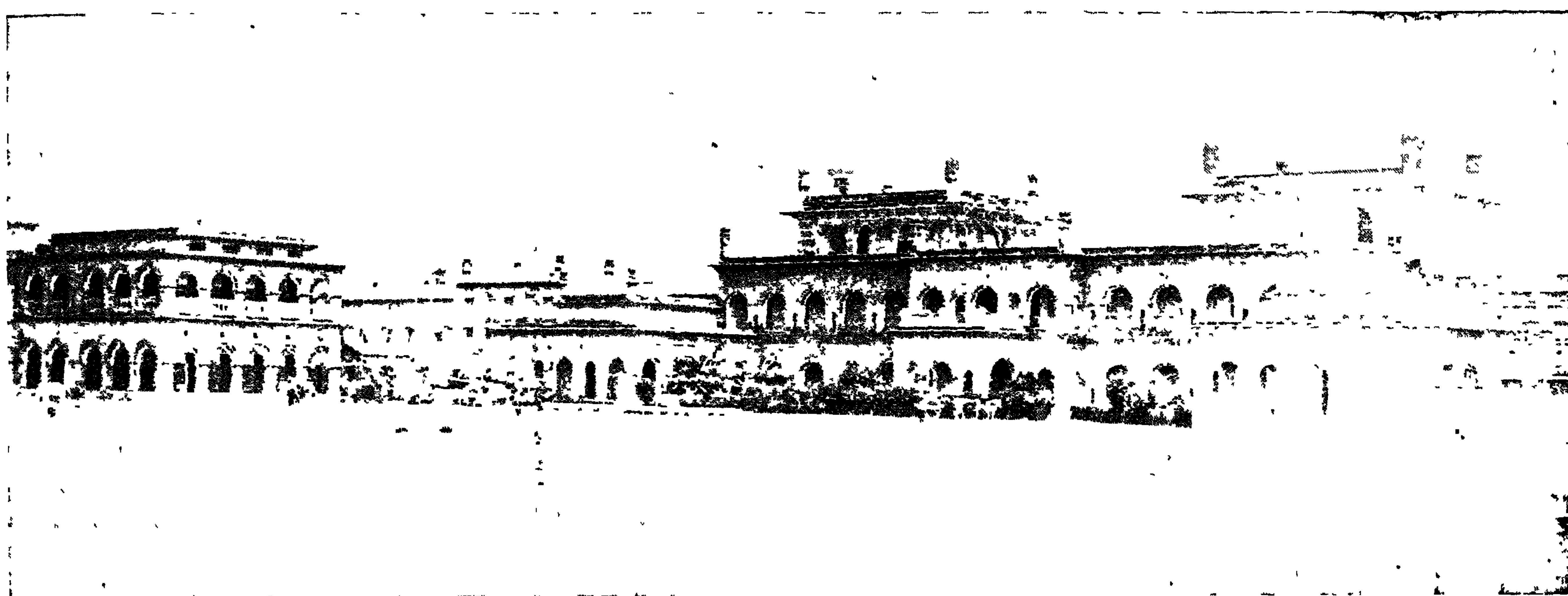


THE QUEEN'S COLLEGE, K, S, M. & Co.

High up in the southern entrance door of the hall, in a glass panel, there is a beautiful tinted picture of the Late Queen Victoria, holding a sceptre and wearing a crown. The eastern wing of the hall, accommodates the College Library, where a large life-size portrait of Dr. Ballantyne adorns the room. On the western side of the hall is a museum of the relics of Saranath.

The excellent fountain of four swans supporting a stone basin of immense size in front of the College, is really a very rare work. Extensive grounds around the buildings, with a low brick wall all around, gives to the locality a charm rarely available at other places.

The other institution of importance in Benares is The Central Hindu College, which, though recent, yet, has been doing a very useful service to the country. It owes its foundation and subsequent development to the present state of great utility to the public, in a greater measure to the ardent efforts of the keen-sighted Mrs. Annie Besant. We should not omit to mention, that in this undertaking of hers, she had received the warm co-operation of several Indian Chiefs and other prominent men of the country, and abroad. Dr. Arthur Richardson, the Principal of the College, from its foundation, has always been doing his best to raise the standard of the Institution, by giving sound education to the Indian boys from far and near.



THE CENTRAL HINDU COLLEGE K. S. M. & Co.

The College was first opened in a small two storeyed house belonging to the late Manohar Das, Treasurer of the Bank of Bengal, in Mohalla Bhuth Bhairav, near the sacred tank Karnaghanta. As the numerical strength of boys steadily increased, the house proved too small to accommodate the increasing students, and the College was thence removed to a larger house in Mohalla Nandan Sahu, two months afterwards. When; the Maharajah of Benares, foreseeing the numerous benefits which such an institution may bestow upon the future generation, granted some 13 bighas of land, and a few houses at Mohalla Kamacha, to the trustees of the College. In March 1879, the College was taken over to its present site in Bhelupura.

The original buildings were repaired, altered and enlarged, with large extensions carried out subsequently of boarding houses, and a temple of Saraswati. The College is furnished with excellently equipped laboratories and a decent library containing about 8000 volumes.

The College has an efficient staff of Indian and European Professors, and is affiliated to the Allahabad University. Students of the College study up to the M. A. degree in English and Sanskrit. The number of students on the rolls is satisfactory, being composed of local students as well as those from the other provinces. The study of Sanskrit is compulsory on all, at least to a certain standard, and religious instruction according to prescribed text books, form items in the curriculum. It is also said that the trustees of the College do not accept Government aid.

We gather from the annual reports that during the first nine years, over Rs. 4,189,000 have been received, of which, some where about a quarter portion have been spent in buildings and furniture, and a good portion of the remaining sum is safely deposited.

"The Benares cantonment lies to the south of the Barna, extending west wards from Nadesar, the Mint, and the grand trunk road, which also forms the boundary on the south. The Indian Infantry lines are situated in the south western corner, between the main and loop lines of Railway. North of the railway are the old artillery lines, no longer used, the Sadar Bazaar, and then the bungalows of the officers. The British Infantry are close to the railway station, between it and the Sadar Bazaar. In the north-east are the church and post-office. The management of the cantonment is entrusted to the usual committee, which disposes of an average income of Rs. 12,500 from the cantonment fund."—District Gazetteer vol. xxvi.



THE LATE DEV NARAIN'S PALACE AND GARDENS AUSANGANJ. K. S. M & Co.

The Municipal history of Benares, has a very peculiar antecedent. The first attempt in the direction was made by Jonathan Duncan, the city Chowkidhars being

then maintained out of the Chowkidhari tax collected by the Mahalladhars, which had the legal sanction under the Regulation XVII of 1795. It continued, unchanged till 1867; successive changes and frequent attempts to levy a house tax did not meet with success. Up to 1850 the affairs were sometimes in the hands of the Magistrates and sometimes in those of the local agents. In fact, all the early attempts at effecting substantial improvements in the affairs of the City, were being met with various obstacles, and the first public latrines were erected only after 1853. There being no public sweepers, the services of private ones were employed as is still done in the pucca quarters of the City.

After passing through successive stages, since the year 1867 when the Municipal Act xxvi of 1850, was applied to Benares and the suburbs, the Municipal Board came into existence since October 1884, replacing the Committee, which was conducting all such affairs of the City till then. The last changes were made in 1904, and the Municipality now consists of 28 members. 21 of whom are elected, while six are nominated, with an *ex-officio* chairman. The main source of income of the Benares Municipality consists in an Octroi tax on imports, which forms about half, while the others constitute assessed taxes, of water, light and house etc., Income from rents, hackney and boat licenses, and from the sale of accumulated rubbish as manure, add to the general income of the Municipality. The water supply, drainage, conservancy, lighting etc., form the chief sources of income.

An adequate supply of filtered water to the people has involved the Municipality to a debt to the Government of Rs. 19,58,226, to be repaid by sixty annual instalments of Rs. 84,844. The surplus amount was met by subscriptions and a special grant.

The drainage system of stoneware pipe sewers, fitted with flushing tanks, manholes, ventilating shafts, and other requisite appliances, was started about 1899, at an estimate of thirteen lakhs, ten being borrowed lrom Government, and Rs. 1,22,954 being contribution from the Kasi Ganga Prasadini Sabah.

The Chetgunj road, running westwards in contiuation from the road to Rajghat, continues from the City towards the north-west, and after crossing the Grand Trunk Road, near the Nadesar tank.

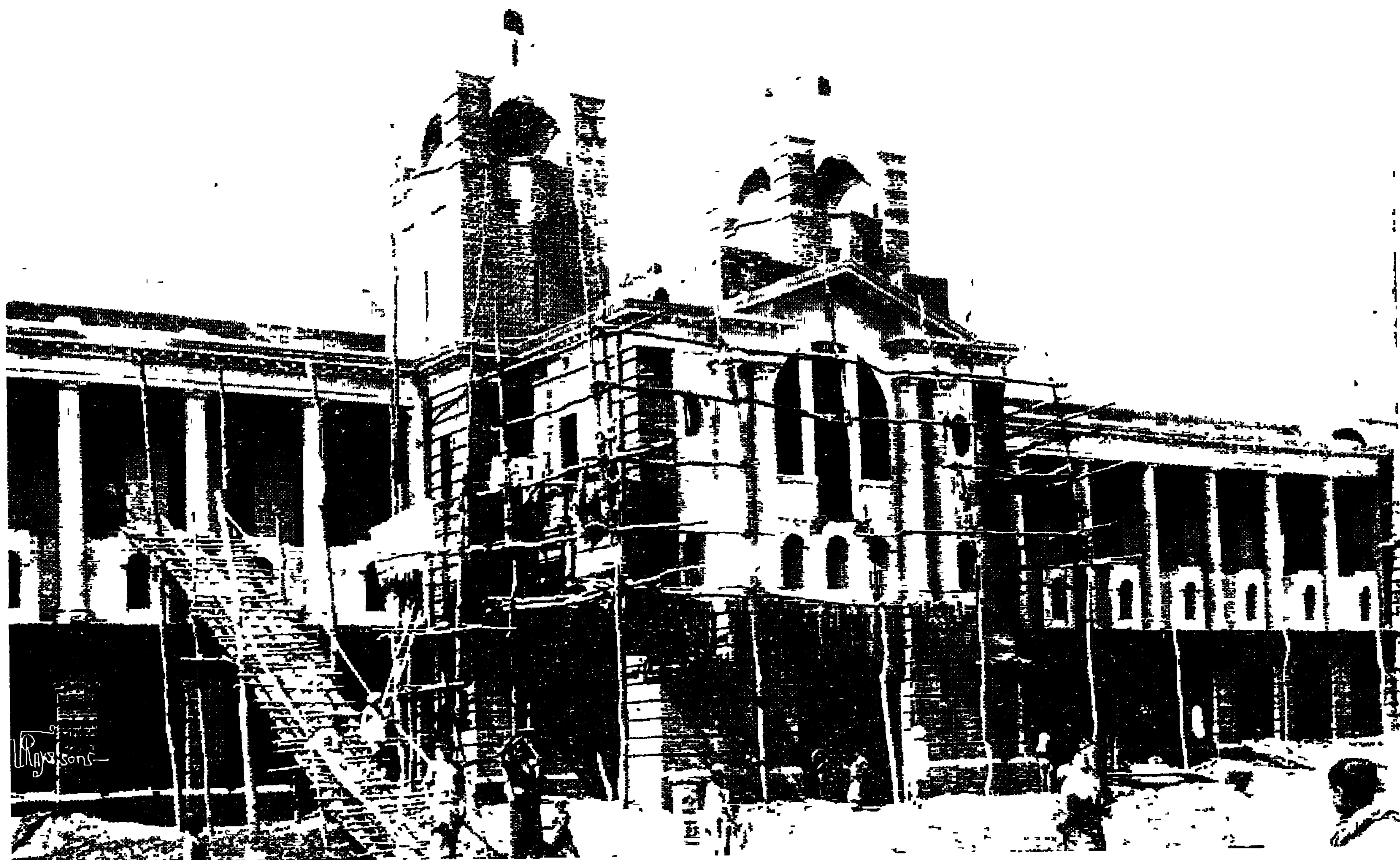
The Mint of Benares, close to these quarters, was established in 1730, and remained under the supervision of the Rajahs of Benares till 1781, when the Resident was put in charge of it. It played a very good part, during the great mutiny, having given shelter to many anxious families. In the front of the Raja Bazar, is the spacious ground enclosing the Nadessur Kotti, belonging to the Maharajah of Benares. This building in which Mr. Davis, the Judge, lived, at the time of the rebellion of Wazir Ali, the Ex-Nawab, has played an important part in those dangerous days. It is now the town residence of the Maharajah. There are several roads meeting about this part and take to different parts of Cantonment and other Mohallas of the City.



NANDESSUR KOTTI OF THE MAHARAJAH OF BENARES, K. S. M. & Co.

Amongst the charitable institutions may be mentioned Kali Shankar Asylum, already spoken of, and a Lunatic Asylum, dating from 1809, located in Hukulgang. Besides the above, which are under the control of the Government, there are several others which need better management and supervision, considering the extent of the several donor's munificence. We mean the hundreds of *Chatrams* or *Satras* in which poor students and ascetics are supposed to get free board. Though, now in many of them only idlers and pilgrim agents or their gumastahs, are fed, the total number of even such being considerably smaller than what they are respectively provided for, by the benefactors, few of the *bona fide* students or ascetics, in need of such help, do resort to them, owing to the peculiarly unrelishable accompaniments, that have somehow or other, accumulated near such as are responsible for their better conduct. As such, it may not go without irritating some itching palms concerned, yet, we venture to say, that unless some respectable body, volunteer to come to the rescue of such noble and charitable institutions, the existing bad state might rush to a hopelessly ruinous one, which God forbid. The work is of very great importance, since it concerns the disposal, of several thousands of rupees annually in all of them put together, which we are sure, under better management, may be utilised to greater advantage, instead of as now, sheltering unpleasant characters, the number of whom, especially amongst the Brahmins, may be counted by hundreds, leaving free margin to many who are really deserving of such munificence, amongst those that resort to these institutions.

The language of the people is the western Bhojpuri dialect of Bihar, which is spoken in Azamgarh. most of Ghazipur, and parts of Mirzapur, Jaunpur and Fyzabad. To the west it blends into the Awadhi form of Eastern Hindi; but the two languages are very distinct, the Bihari being a direct descendant of the Prakrit of Magadha. In Benares, we naturally hear all languages being spoken; Bengalee is spoken, besides by a considerable portion of the fixed population, while Mahrathi, Guzarati, Punjabi, and Dravidi are also prevalent though in a lesser degree.



THE NEW COURTS (UNDER CONSTRUCTION.) K. S. M. & Co.

Benares, as the central seat of Sanskrit learning, had produced, many men of high literary merits. A number of Poets, Devotionists, and Pandits, had adorned the land on various ages. Kabir and Tulsi Das, have established their names as great religious reformers and restorers, having bequeathed their rich legacies to posterity. The Hindi language has been greatly upheld by these sages.

Narayana Bhatt who wrote the *Prayaga Ratna*, his son Shankar Bhat, who wrote *Dwait Nirnaya* and his son, Nilakanta Bhattacharya, who wrote *Bhagavad. Bhaskar*, by order of Maharajah Bhagavant Dev, flourished in the sixteenth century. The above family is a Paithan Dakkini family of repute, who had settled in Benares.

In the age following, flourished the famous Bhattoji Dikshit, son of Lakshmi Dhar Suri, who has immortalised his memorable name with the authorship of *Sidhant Kaumudi.* His other works are *Manorama, Shabdh Kaustuba* etc. In the following 18th century flourished Nagoji Bhatt, pupil of the grandson of Bhattoji Dikshit, who wrote *Shabdendu Shekar, Paribashendu Shekar* and *Manjusha*; while Raghuvir, wrote the *Muhurt Sarvaswa, Muhurt Chintamani* and *Nilkaanthi.*

We must also mention the name of Kabindra Saraswati, who was the Poet Laurette of Shah Jehan. He wrote the *Kabindra Kalpalata.*

Bibi Ratna Kumari, of Murshidabad, and grand mother of Raja Siva Prasad, wrote *Premratna* in 1830, while Pandit Babu Sastri, Professor of Astronomy, in the Government college, wrote the *Vij ganit* (Algebra).

The name, of Bhattoji Dikshit and Nagoji Bhatt amongst the Sanskrit writers and of Kabir and Tulsi Das. amongst the Hindi writers, have immortalized their names to the posterity in a manner unattainable by others.

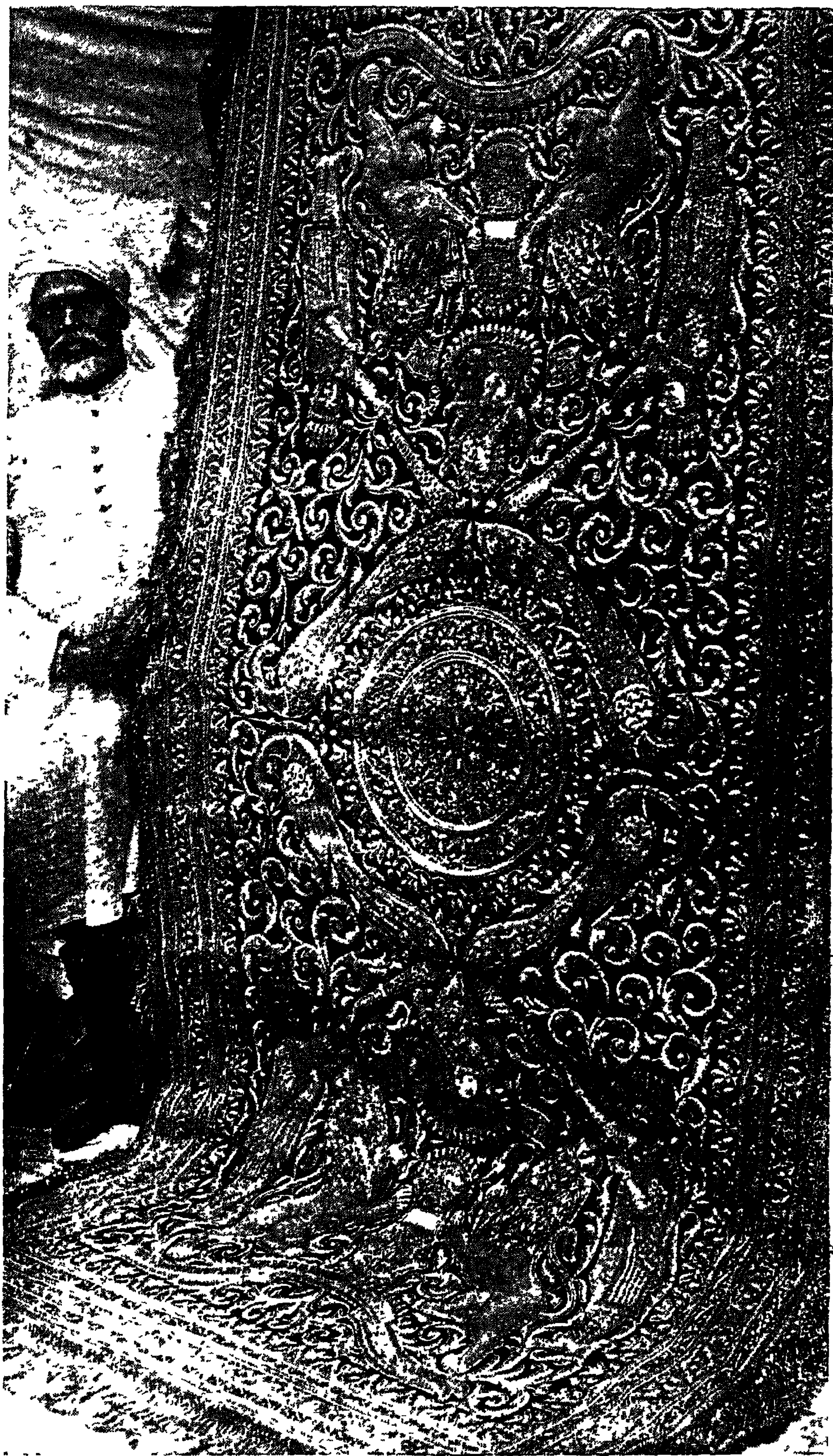
There are many Banking establishments in Benares, and amongst the recognised ones, may be mentioned, a local branch of the Bank of Bengal, which takes the place of local treasury. The Benares Bank, though a recent concern, is yet, in a flourishing condition. All the others not being registered as a joint-stock company, are more private firms, but they are all doing very extensive business with other commercial centres of the country, Most of these bankers had splendid chances of making fortunes in the earlier days of the first establishment of British Supremacy in the Province. As early as 1825, the Bank of Bengal had a Benares agency though later on, on the completion of the present fine structure, a branch was permanently located therein, in 1894. The Benares Bank was started only in 1905, with a capital of ten lakhs, the share holders being the prominent merchants of the City. Its increasing prosperity ensures a good future for it, in this flourishing City. Amongst the private banks, carrying a profitable business, we mention the following. Sitaram Naik Daja Kalia, a rich Maharatta family of Nagpore, have a flourishing business in the adjoining districts, as well, with an annual profit of about Rs. 10,000 The present owner of Sitaram Keshevram, carries on a very lucrative business while a member of the family is the Government Treasurer.

The other respectable family of Bankers, are the noble descendants of the respected Babu Garudas Mitter. The firm of Madhuban Das Dawarka Das, represented by Babu Sham Das, is another respectable family from Ahmedabad. That of Babu Brij Bhukhan Das, started by Bulaki Das and Devi Prasad, of Allahabad, carry on a flourishing business with a profit of nearly 17,000 annually. The very wealthy Guzarathi family of Beni Ram Madho Ram earn a profit of about Rs. 20,000 per annum. There are several others, Lochi Ram Gopinath, Gopal Das Nannu Mall, Gokul Prasad, etc.

The place of Benares, in the matter of trade is now only secondary, though it once enjoyed a prime part. Mirzapur has shared a portion of its trade in the supply of its neighbouring country. Gazipur, another flourishing centre has also robbed another integral part of its trade. The downfall of Benares trade is partly due to the decay of the river traffic.

Though not a manufacturing centre in the country, yet the nature and quality of its manufactured articles with a constant demand for them, amongst the millions of the country, have secured for Benares a fair amount of reputation. Work in metals, especially brass, and the manufacture of silken fabrics have contributed immensely to the fame of Benares in its manufactured articles Several thousands of people in the City and its surroundings find employment in the manufacture of the above items. Cotton-Spinning and weaving alone give occupation and living for about thirteen thousand persons in Benares City itself, with another ten thousand beyond the Municipal area. Fine Muslins called *tanzeb*, in plain, striped or floral patterns deserve special mention as of a very fine quality. Cotton dyeing and printing of an ordinary class is also conducted to a considerable extent. But the most important one is that of silken-

fabrics, with or without lace interwoven. The weavers in the city, who are mostly Mohamadans, number about twelve thousand, though a small portion of them is composed of high caste Hindus. There are several looms in the city, but every proprietor, who holds many of them, has his own designer, according to whose plans, the fabric is manufactured. So, practically there are several patterns made and there are few chances of even a few of them to agree one with the other. The raw material is imported largely from foreign countries, like, China, Central Asia, Italy. and Bengal. The Tasar quality from Bengal is used for course fabrics and where strength is required. Those from Italy, are now largely used for what is popularly known as "Kashi Silk." The dyeing of silk is done in Benares by experts who are famed for their skill. What is produced in silk in Benares comprise all kinds except velvet, and range from the course tasar to the highly refined and fine textured fabrics like brocades, The celebrity of these under the name *Kincob* is widely known in the world. They are made in an infinite variety of forms and patterns, interwoven with threads of gold or silver, or of colored silk, as the case may be. Geometrical patterns or floral designs ere adopted in the manufacture of alaborate pieces. These are largely used, as they are, without making them into garments, owing to their enormous weight. *Poth Thans* of a lighter nature are also made having patterns similar to the above. Silk Duppattas, Saris, Churis, Dhoties &c., are made of a superior variety called *pitambar*. These are generally colored in different tints, and are furnished with the fancy borders of gold or silver threads and floral designs for the body. Besides the

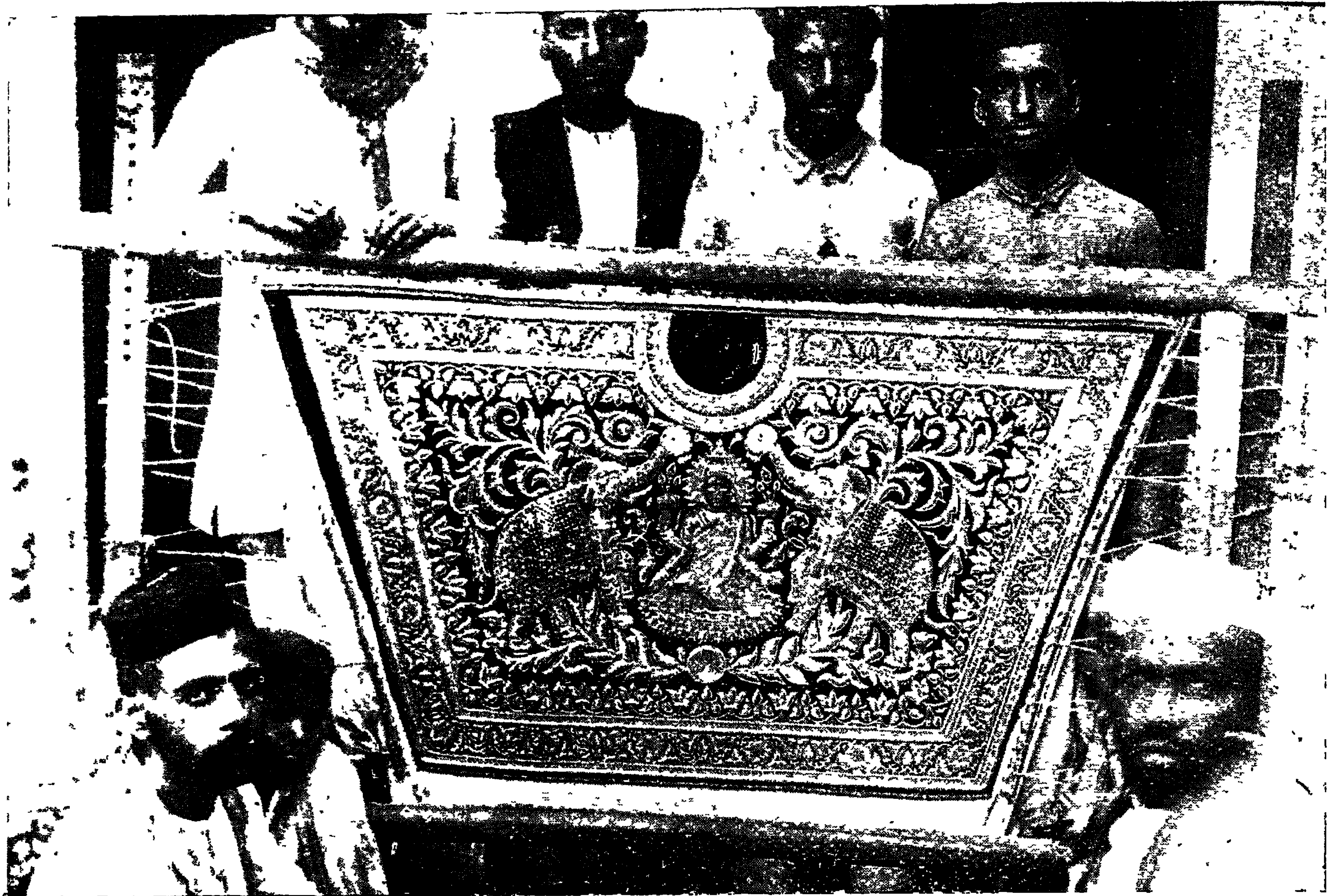


PALANQUEEN TOP—WINNER OF A GOLD MEDAL K. S. M. & Co.

Prepared and Supplied by
K. S. Muthiah & Co., Silk Pithamber Merchants,
Benares City.

To His Holiness, The Pandara Sannadhigal of Thiruvavadudurai Mutt. Tanjore District, S. India.

purely silken fabrics, another class in which there is a mixture of cotton and silk is also done for the use of the Mahamadans, called *Mashru*. Another allied trade, is that of



PALANQUEEN SIDE-PIECE. K. S. M. & Co.

embroidery in silk or satin and generally in gold and silver thread, The designs are mostly, highly artistic and fetch large prices. Embroidered caps, umbrellas, table covers, palanqueen covers &c , are some of the other rich articles, having a moderate demand.

The great demand for silk goods amongst the Hindus, had always existed, owing to its superiority to cotton goods, as purer and more suitable for ceremonials, etc. It is an established fact that it was preferred even in the Epic period. The Mohomadans too use it largely, but mixed with cotton, since they regard it as too effeminate for men's garments. Yet, in the colder climates, and on war occasions, pure silks and heavy brocades have been preferred, for the better protection they give. Mohamad Tóglak is said to have maintained as many as 500 weavers to be making his gold brocades. In the palace of the Maharajah of Benares, may be found several fine old designs of this rare product.

The other great craft of Benares, is the metal work, chiefly that of brass. Though this class of work is not very good, yet commercially they give the manufacturers a regular demand for these. This line has yet greatly deteriorated from its ancient standard.

Amongst other miscellaneous manufactures may be grouped those of image making in metal or stones, wooden toys, lac bangles, &c.

About two miles south of the Assi, is the imposing fort of Ramnagar, on the opposite bank of the Ganges. Viewed from this side of the river, the fort presents the sublimity and grandeur of a miniature citadel. It was commenced by Raja Balwant Singh and completed by Rajah Cheit Singh. Facing the Ganges, on the west, it rises from the level of the river, in massive stone walls surmounted by two stone bastions on the north side, with another on the south. Between the upper two and the lower one, a precipitous flight of stone steps lead from the level of the river to the stone door of the fort by the river side. We have already spoken of the temples of Mahadeva, Vyasa and Ganga in the space adjoining the steps.

The main approach to the fort is by a well-metalled broad road on its eastern side. It is a massive stone gate high enough to allow an elephant with a *howdah* on, to pass through.

There are three stories on the inner side of the gate, having the Naubat Khana on the third floor High brick walls encompass the fort on all sides. Passing through this gate, into the court-yard, we see to the left a series of new buildings, which accommodate the Maharajah's offices; while facing the north, another high gate leads into the inner square, wherefrom the Durbar Hall and other portions of the Maharajah's Palace are reached. Over the second gateway, just mentioned, on a marble slab, could be found, the family motto and crest of the Maharajah, which are two branches of the Bael tree encircling two fish, and the heriditary emblem of royalty. The motto reads *Satyath Nasthiaparo Dharmaha.* (There is no religion higher than truth.) The flag staff is also fixed on top of this gate The Palace within, of the Maharajah, is furnished with exquisitely carved white marble balcony. In this court-yard, there are two other buildings, besides the Palace; one of them contains a large chronometer clock, made by the Maharajah's watch and clock maker, the late B. Moolchand, a self-made man of skill, who enjoyed great favours of the Maharajah. The charecteristic feature of the clock is that it indicates the exact time of the rising and setting of the sun and the moon, etc. A miniature clock of the pattern was presented to the Prince of Wales, the late King Edward vii, when the Prince honoured the Maharajah with a visit. The other building which is in the opposite direction is the arsenal of the Maharajah, containing many old weapons and other curios.

Ascending the stone steps leading to the exquisitely carved doorway of the Palace, we reach a room, overhanging the clock-building. It is paved with black marble slabs. From this room, we enter into a large and grand oblong hall, running from east, to west, called the Throne and the Reception Hall. A richly embellished marble mantlepiece, from Agra, adorns this hall with other fine attractions. Passing out of this hall, towards the west, one gets to an open hall, standing on stone pillars, which being just above the temples and Ghat above mentioned, overhangs the parapets of the fort wall and the river. It is on a very high level and presents a striking scenery all round, the Hall running from north to south. Opposite the rectangular hall and separated by a court yard, are located the private rooms, of the Maharajah.

We have already had evidence of the late Maharajah's allegiance to the Government, especially during the Great Sepoy Mutiny. His creditable services on that trying

occasion were appreciated, and the Government honored him with titles, besides raising him to the position of Maharajah. He was also permitted to adopt the heir apparent to the throne, since he had no son. The present Maharajah, his brother's son was adopted accordingly and was brought up under late Maharajahs personal supervision.

At the suggestion of the late Mr. E. A. Reade, the then commisioner of Benares, the late Mahrajah had constructed a well in England, near Oxford, styled Ishwaree Memorial Well, for the benefit of the inhabitants of that part of the country where water is scarce. The well and garden are still in the locality, where annual gatherings are held. Mr, Arthur Reade, the son of the late Mr. Reade, being in charge of the well and garden.

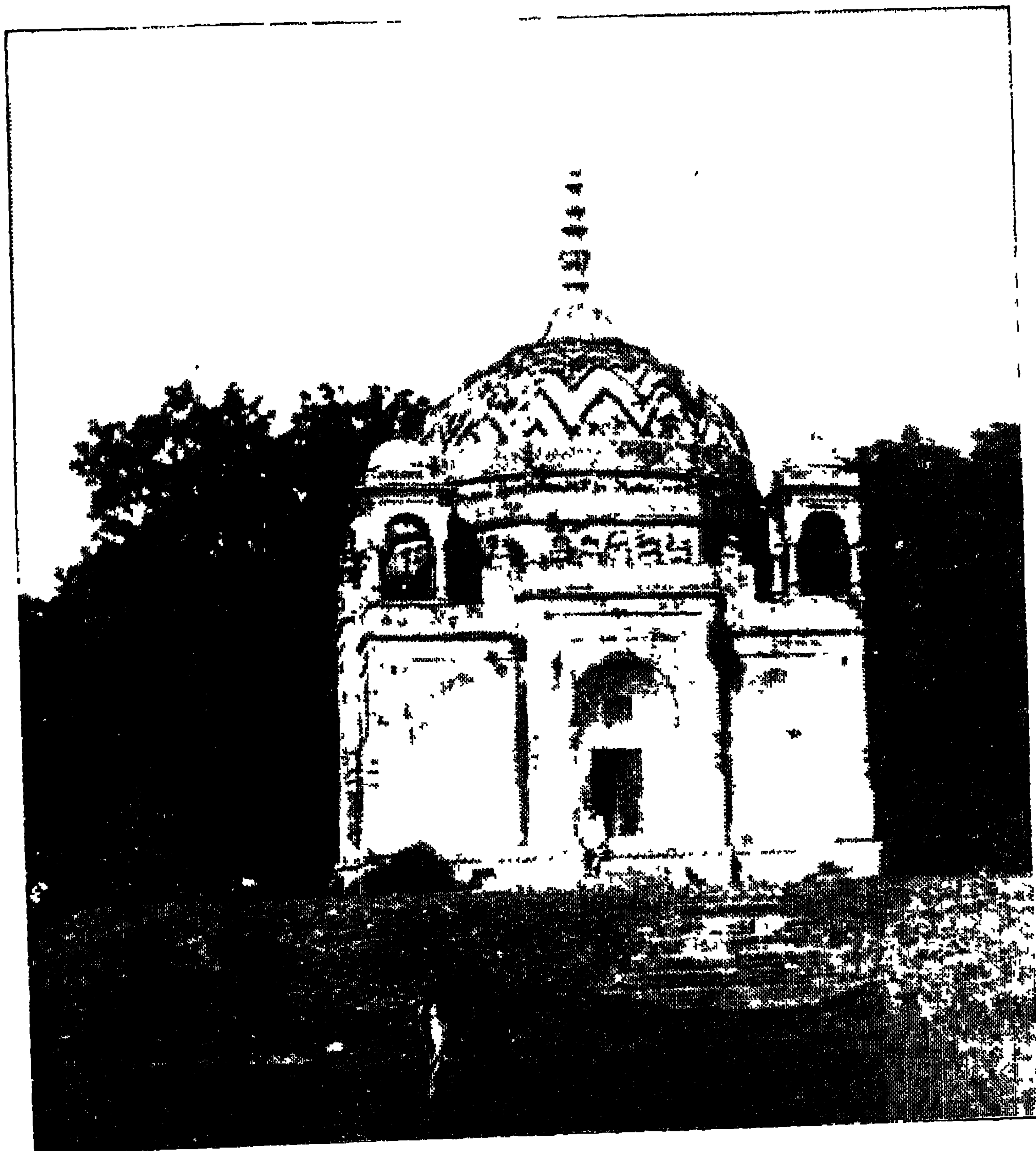
Owing to the great popularity ol the late Maharajah, the late Lord Northbrook appointed His Highness, as a member of the Imperial Legislative Council. When the late King Edward VII., visited India, as Prince of Wales, His Highness was introduced to the Prince, by the late Lord Northbrook: and the Prince, accepting an invitation of His Highness, visited Benares, when he was most respectfully and loyally received and entertained by the late Maharajah.

The crowning act of the late Maharajah, on behalf of the citizens of Benares, was his starting the Ganga Prasadhini Sabah, in conjunction with the several leading gentleman, and at the kind suggestion of the late Sir Auckland Colvin. The object of the Sabah was to supply the people of Benares, with a supply of good drinking water, and of effecting a complete drainage system in Benares, so that the drains etc., filthy water of the town may not mix with the Ganges. A public meeting was convened by the late Maharajah, at the Town Hall, under His Highness's Presidentship, when the late Maharajah of Durbhangha, the late Raja Siva Prasad, and other gentry were present. The Committee arrived at a decision to find out new system of drainage, by which all the city drains may be diverted into the Barna. Unfortunately the Maharajah died before any active work was started and the large sum of money contributed for the purpose, was taken up by the Municipal Board, as we have noticed already.

The Present Maharajah, Sir Prabhu Narain Singh, G C.I.E., who was installed by Sir Auckland Colvin in 1890, as the legitimate successor to the Raj, following in the footsteps of the late Maharajah, introduced many reforms and changes in his dominions, with the consent and approval of the Commissioner. When Prince Albert Victor, visited Benares, the Maharajah invited him to visit his game preserves at Chakiya and Shikargung. The Prince went there shooting with the Maharajah, and was very much impressed with his personality. The Prince expressed his good will to the Agent of the Governor-General. The active help, the Maharajah rendered to the Local Government, during famine operations, created very good impression in his favour. King George V, and Queen Mary, when they visited this country, as Prince and Princess of Wales, were His Highness's honoured guests in Benares, with His Excellency Lord Minto. Lord Minto, on the eve of his leaving India, accepted the invitation of the Maharajah, to visit Benares. Availing of the opportunity of replying to the Maharajah's toast, at a banquet, given in honor of His Excellency's visit, Lord Minto is said to have announced the intention of the Government of India, to raise the Maharajah to the rank of a Ruling Chief.



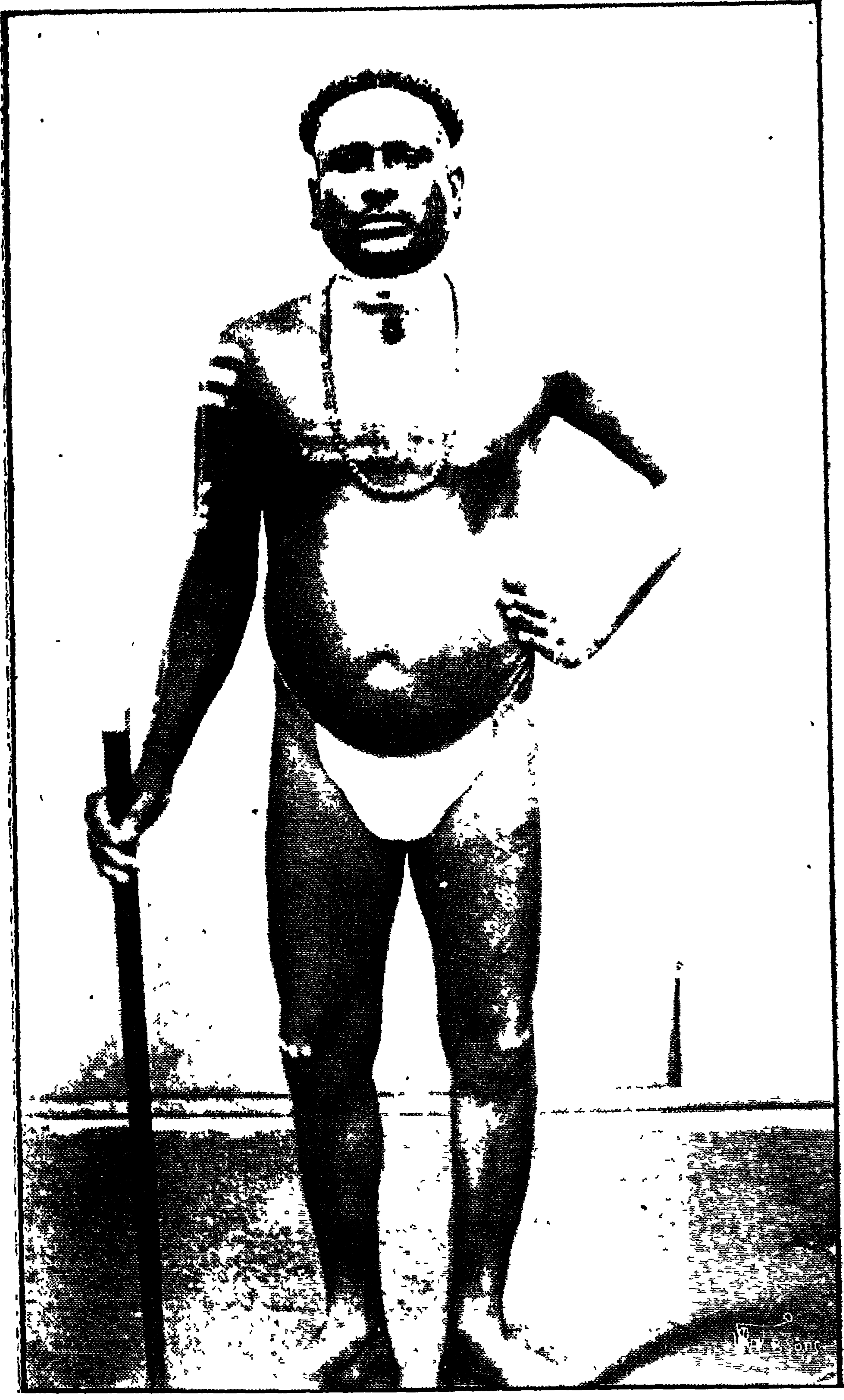
THE OLD MINT OF BENARES (VIDE PAGE 157)



TOMB OF LAL KHAN,
A MINISTER OF A FORMER RAJAH OF BENARES,
NEAR KASI STATION.



A BEAUTY OF BENARES.



A SADHU OF BENARES.